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DOCUMENTS ON THE FOREIGN POLICY OF ISRAEL, 1951

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FOREWORD

This volume is the sixth in the series relating to the foreign policy of Israel, covering the period from January to December 1951. The editorial policy followed in the present volume is the same as that which governed the preparation of the previous volumes. The 536 documents selected deal primarily with foreign policy and defence matters, but a number of documents closely related to the conduct of foreign policy have also been included. Among the topics that fall under this category are economic affairs, relations with the Jewish diaspora, and *aliya*. The selection of these documents, from among the large number preserved from that period, is intended to provide comprehensive coverage of issues, deliberations, the range of opinions, and the shaping of Israel's foreign policy.

A number of documents recording discussions and consultations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been included, the editors being aware of the importance of documentation relating to policy planning. It should be borne in mind, however, that debates over foreign policy were not limited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also took place in the Government as a whole, political party executive committees, and the Knesset.

The minutes of Government meetings have not been declassified and are not available for research purposes, but information derived from them has been used by the editors in the preparation of the editorial notes and footnotes.

Most of the documents published in this volume derive from the files of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, now in the custody of the Israel State Archives. A few come from the archives of the Defence Ministry and Israel Defence Forces. In writing the notes and introduction, the editors relied on additional material filed in other departments of the State Archives, other material in the I.D.F. archives, documents from the British Public Records Office, and those U.S. State Department papers that have appeared in the series, *Foreign Relations of the United States*. Photocopies of the British documents that were used by the editors are now available to scholars in the Israel State Archives.

Arrangement of the documents. The documents are arranged in chronological order. Documents composed or set out in parts, over a number of days, are placed according to the earliest date. The position of telegrams in the chronological sequence is based on the earliest known

date among the following: date of composition, date of dispatch, or, where neither of these is known, date of receipt. Reports of discussions and meetings appear under the date of writing rather than the date when the conversation or meeting was held. When the date of writing is not known, the location of the document is determined by the date of the event reported on (this date always appears in the editorial heading prefixed to the document).

The text. The text printed here is that of the original document, except for the following editorial changes and emendations:

(a) Addresses of senders and addressees as well as dates in their original form have been deleted. In some of the reports, memoranda, and minutes, the original headings have also been omitted. The deleted information is incorporated in part in a standard format (see below), in the editorial headings, or in a note.

(b) A number of passages that have no direct relevance to foreign policy have been omitted (including personal matters), as have a few offensive references to individuals and passages referring to topics and names that have not yet been declassified. All such omissions are indicated in the body of the text and as a rule are explained in footnotes.

(c) Minor errors have been corrected silently. No attempt has been made beyond that to correct style, syntax, or grammar.

(d) Common abbreviations and abbreviations whose meaning is not in doubt have been expanded to full form in square brackets on their first appearance in the text. Subsequently, the abbreviations have been retained in the text. Abbreviations of proper names have always been expanded to full form in square brackets. However, abbreviations commonly pronounced as such and acronyms (e.g., U.N., I.D.F., U.S.A.) have not been altered.

(e) Missing words have in some cases been added, either conjecturally (in square brackets, marked with a question mark) or on the basis of a parallel text of the same document (in square brackets and an explanatory note).

(f) English spelling has been standardized to conform with British usage, except in documents originating in American institutions or written by Americans.

(g) Original punctuation and capitalization have been retained to the extent possible. Corrections have been made only in cases of obvious mistakes or to avoid misunderstandings. In telegrams, where the original punctuation is partial, the editors have exercised much greater liberty in determining capitalization and punctuation.

(h) The outgoing text of telegrams has been used when extant.

Signatures. Signatures appended in the writer's own hand are printed in bold type.

Editorial headings. The heading includes, *inter alia,* the file reference

of the document and its destination, except where the addressee is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or some other agency of the Government of Israel. The origin of the document and the date of its composition or transmission are given in standard format in the heading.

Editorial notes. These provide information on important events or developments. They precede the earliest document that contains a reference to the subject or appear according to the date on which the event took place.

Footnotes. The annotations consists mainly of numbered footnotes, explanatory notes, and cross-references, intended to illuminate topics that might otherwise be unclear and indicate other documents that contain additional information. The cross-references occasionally are to files and documents that remain classified, on the assumption that they will eventually be made available to scholars.

Biographical notes have been provided where necessary for a proper understanding of the text. Information on most persons mentioned in the documents is included in the index. The index does not provide such information on persons mentioned only in the footnotes.

Index and list of documents. A list of the documents and editorial notes, indicating their main subjects, appears at the beginning of the volume; an index of persons and subjects is at the end of the volume.

Maps. Two English maps have been included in the Main Volume—one of the armistice line between Israel and Syria (excluding the Dan region), the other of all the armistice lines between Israel and its neighbours.

Companion Volume. This companion volume consists of English summaries of the Hebrew documents, a translation of the editorial notes, footnotes, introduction, and list of documents, and an English index to both the Main Volume and the Companion Volume.

We would like to thank all the individuals and institutions who helped in the preparation of this volume: Mr Michael Elitzur of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who read the manuscript and made many useful comments; Dr Zehava Ostfeld, assistant director of the Israel Military and Defence Establishment Archives, for her assistance in locating supplementary documents; Mr Joseph Elron, who did the copy-editing of the Main and Companion Volumes and supervised the proofreading; Mrs Yael Raz, who prepared the biographical notes; Dr Nana Sagi, who prepared the index to the Main Volume; Mr George Weill, who helped with the French documents; Mrs Nina Shpringer, who helped collate the documents; Prof. Yehoshua Porath, for his guidance in the transliteration of Arabic names; Mr Naftali Greenwood and Mrs Yaffah Murciano, who translated the summaries of the

Hebrew documents and the notes into English; Mr Yohai Goel, who reviewed the English translation and translated the introduction; Mrs Vera Eden, who typed the English documents and some of the Hebrew ones; Mrs Iris Arad, who typed most of the Hebrew documents; and Shulamit and Yuval Greenbaum, who prepared the maps.

We would also like to thank all those who provided biographical information about themselves or others mentioned in the documents.

INTRODUCTION

The Arab-Israeli conflict, the shaping of Israel's role within the international community, and German reparations were the major challenges facing Israel's foreign policy makers during 1951. This was a year marked by both successes and failures for Israeli diplomacy, which operated within a framework of domestic and external constraints that left their mark on the country's foreign policy. On the domestic front, Israel was engaged in the absorption of mass immigration, was plagued by a severe financial crisis, and witnessed much friction within the government coalition and among the political parties. After the Prime Minister resigned in February over the question of educational policy in the transit camps for immigrants, a caretaker government held office for several months. On the international scene, East-West tension increased to such an extent that Cold War considerations influenced the Great Powers' policy towards Israel and its role in the Middle East.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

The Hula Problem and Negotiations for an Agreement with Syria

The relatively peaceful situation along Israel's borders during its first two years as an independent state was disrupted in the spring of 1951 with the outbreak of military conflict with Syria over the drainage of Lake Hula. The documents included in this volume highlight the development of that conflict from several points of view and reveal the differences of opinion as to strategy and the competition for jurisdiction between the diplomatic and military echelons in security and political affairs, a situation that would be part of the Israeli scene for many years to come.[1]

The Hula drainage plan was considered a national development project of the highest consequence, and the decision for its implementation was unwavering. The plan necessitated the digging of canals and other infrastructure work in the central section of the demilitarized zone between Israel and Syria; it was these activities that led to the outbreak of the Hula conflict.[2] From the moment the demilitarized

1. See, for example, Nos. 55, 323, 343, and 378.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 179.

zones were created by the Israel-Syria armistice agreement, their status proved to be a bone of contention between the parties. The differences of opinion related to the normalization of civilian life in the zone and to whether the chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission was vested with the authority to make binding decisions in this matter. The crux of the question, however, was sovereignty over the zone. Syria claimed that the armistice agreement left open the question of sovereignty until the parties concluded a final agreement, while Israel argued that its sovereignty extended to all land up to the international boundary and interpreted "demilitarized zone" to mean only that the introduction of arms into the area was forbidden.

According to the plan, some of the drainage work was to be executed on lands owned by Jews and Arabs in the demilitarized zone on both banks of the Jordan River; the remainder was to be in the Hula Valley, all of which was under Israeli sovereignty. The engineers' planning did not take into account the possibility of military conflict—an oversight that proved to be of greatest import. When hostilities did break out, the planners were forced to modify their original scheme.[3] As long as the work was limited to Jewish-owned land, even in the demilitarized zone, the Syrians neither intervened nor denounced the project. Once the bulldozers moved onto Arab-owned land, however, they lodged a complaint with the Mixed Armistice Commission. Syria claimed that the project would disrupt the strategic and political balance of power between Israel and Syria, and that the introduction of heavy equipment and workers into the demilitarized zone was a breach of the armistice agreement. Furthermore, it argued, Israel had no right to carry out any work on Arab-owned property before coming to an arrangement with Syria as to the ownership of these lands and the compensation to be paid to their owners.[4] Israel rejected the Syrian claims, replying that the armistice agreement placed no limitations on Israel's right to introduce mechanical equipment and civilian workers into the demilitarized zone. The Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization ruled that the Syrians had no grounds for objecting to a project with clearly civilian objectives which was being implemented on land under Israeli jurisdiction, but that Israel must indemnify the Arab landowners. He therefore demanded an immediate suspension of work, to last until a compensation agreement was reached. Israel acquiesced, agreeing to a temporary work stoppage, but the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission demanded that the halt be open-ended.[5] Israel reacted by adopting a

3. See No. 253.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 179.
5. See Editorial Note, p. 193.

more inflexible position, and the conflict expanded from one between Israel and Syria to include the U.N. agencies in Palestine as well. This development in turn affected the attitude towards Israel at U.N. headquarters and influenced the phrasing of the Security Council resolution of 18 May. The resumption of work, contrary to the decision of the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission, led to shooting incidents between the two sides, which escalated throughout the spring of 1951.[6]

On 30 March, a decision was taken at high military and political levels to continue work on the project. This was to be done without opening fire, but steps would be taken to manifest Israeli sovereignty in the zone.[7] Pursuant to this decision, about 800 Arabs were evacuated from two villages in the central section of the demilitarized zone and transferred to the Arab village of Sha'ab, in the Galilee, on the grounds of protecting their personal safety; the authorities promised to allow them to return to their villages once the area became quiet again. U.N. personnel condemned the Israeli action and unsuccessfully tried to mediate in the dispute.[8] At this stage, the senior echelons of the I.D.F. decided upon another act to demonstrate Israeli sovereignty in the demilitarized zone, this time in its southern section. Israel had previously made no attempt to demonstrate its sovereignty in this section, even though it contained Israeli-owned property; now, in the face of the recent developments, the I.D.F. sent a patrol to al-Hamma on 4 April. The Syrians reacted strongly. Seven members of the patrol were killed and continued Syrian firing prevented extrication of the survivors for many more hours. The dispatch of the patrol was sharply criticized both in the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of the Knesset and in the Foreign Ministry. Ministry officials complained that I.D.F. commanders had taken decisions without consulting them and without taking into account the possible political repercussions of their military decisions. Foreign Minister Sharett termed the al-Hamma foray "thoughtless and irresponsible" and accused those who ordered it of "knowingly sending men to their death."[9] The documents portray the al-Hamma incident as a melancholy affair that uncovered the latent tension between the Foreign Ministry and the I.D.F. during the first years of statehood. In the wake of this incident and its subsequent developments, Sharett attempted to improve coordination between the military and political arms.[10]

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6. See No. 98, n. 1.
7. See No. 100.
8. See No. 103 and *ibid.*, n. 3.
9. See No. 129.
10. See Nos. 122 and 216.

In reaction to the incident, the Government decided on retaliatory action and the destruction of three villages in the zone. Israel Air Force planes bombed Syrian army positions and the police outpost at al-Hamma while I.D.F. ground forces levelled the villages.[11]

The Israeli retaliation raised a storm of protest in the United States and at the U.N. Israeli representatives abroad, surprised by the intensity of international reaction, closed ranks and maintained a solid front to defend Israel's position. In their reports home, however, Israeli diplomats in New York and Washington were highly critical of the bombing and of the fact that it was carried out at the height of the Korean War and in the middle of negotiations for U.S. economic aid and German reparations. They recommended the adoption of a more restrained policy in order to mitigate international criticism of Israel.[12]

Syria lodged a complaint with the Security Council over the air raid. During the Council debate Israel drew fire from all sides and found herself completely isolated. Though its representatives continued to defend Israel's action vigorously, when pressure increased it was decided—at the initiative of Walter Eytan, Director-General of the Foreign Ministry—to convey to the Council Israel's regret at the bombing.[13] This expression of regret succeeded somewhat in alleviating the harsh atmosphere in Washington and New York, but did not change the tenor of international reaction to the incident. The Syrians, too, were not slow to retaliate. In early May, Syrian forces penetrated Israeli territory beyond the demilitarized zone, seizing control of some hilltops and bunkers in the Tel al-Mutilla area. In a bloody battle, which cost 40 dead, I.D.F. units repelled the Syrians and recaptured the area. Now it was Israel's turn to demand that the major powers and the U.N. react vigorously and condemn Syria; but, given the generally critical attitude towards Israel that was the order of the day, the international community did not apply the same severe standards to the Syrian action as it had to the Israeli air raid.[14] The Americans initiated a resolution condemning Israel and even attempted to prevent Israeli delegates from trying to influence its phrasing.[15] Israel's representatives at the U.N., in Washington, and in European capitals began a diplomatic offensive aimed at proving the direct involvement of regular Syrian units, and demanded that Syria be condemned for its action.[16] Their strenuous efforts, and even the direct involvement of

11. See Editorial Note, p. 215, and No. 107.
12. See Nos. 137, 221, and 233.
13. See Nos. 131, 136, 141, and n. 2 to No. 141.
14. See Nos. 157–59, 163–64, and 168.
15. See Nos. 173 and 185.
16. See Nos. 177, 179 (n. 1), 180, 186–88, and 190.

President Weizmann,[17] failed to change the atmosphere or moderate the Security Council resolution, which was adopted on 18 May 1951. The resolution condemned Israel for the al-Hamma bombing, instructed it to return the evacuated Arabs to their villages in the demilitarized zone, under the supervision of the Mixed Armistice Committee, and made resumption of work in the zone conditional upon arrangements to be reached with the chairman of that committee.[18]

The resolution was greeted with anger in Israel. Knuckling under to Syrian aggression, encouragement of Arab aggression, disregard of Syrian violence, and a one-sided approach to the dispute—these were only some of the complaints lodged by Israeli diplomats when they met foreign representatives in Israel and abroad.[19] The Knesset, too, devoted a special session to the Security Council resolution; Sharett informed the parliament that Israel considered the demilitarized zone to be its sovereign territory. Opposition members accused the Government, and the Foreign Minister personally, of adopting an unsuccessful policy and of succumbing to American pressure.[20] The pre-election atmosphere that characterized the Knesset debate influenced Sharett and members of the Foreign Ministry staff in their negotiations with U.N. officials over implementation of the Security Council decision. Negotiating the renewal of work on the drainage project and the return of the Arab villagers to the demilitarized zone proved to be a lengthy and fatiguing process. After a protracted series of meetings between Gen. Riley, the Chief of Staff of the UNTSO in Palestine, and Sharett, Israel was forced to agree to a temporary halt of work on Arab-owned lands, while continuing in the interim only on those under Jewish ownership.[21] Following lengthy correspondence, marked by many complaints and much criticism on the part of U.N. officials who demanded that Israel carry out the Security Council resolution to the letter, Israel was forced to repatriate all the Arabs who had been evacuated from the demilitarized zone and to allow them to renew cultivation of their lands.[22] As a result of these developments, work on the drainage project was slowed down; its former pace was resumed only some time later, but the work was hedged by restrictions based on the Security Council resolution.

The military confrontation with Syria ended in May 1951. The dispute over the drainage project, too, gradually died away. The root of the matter, the question of sovereignty in the demilitarized zone, was

17. See No. 184.
18. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
19. See Nos. 178, 180, and 181.
20. See Editorial Note, pp. 149–51.
21. See Nos. 197–98, Editorial Note, p. 153, and No. 209.
22. See, for example, Nos. 234, 246, 255–56, 260–61, 295, 298, 349, 363, and 372.

not solved, neither by the military nor by the diplomatic confrontations with the Syrians. At one stage, Syria launched a diplomatic manoeuvre to advance its objectives. In mid-June, the Syrian representative on the Mixed Armistice Commission proposed to his Israeli counterpart that high-ranking talks be initiated with the object of reaching an agreement to divide the demilitarized zone. The Israeli representative flatly rejected any suggestion that would lead to a partition of the zone between the two countries, but after some discussion the two agreed that each would propose to his government to allow a meeting of foreign ministry officials, with the participation of U.N. officers, in order to find a *modus vivendi* in the zone that would not prejudice the rights of either side in the final settlement.[23] Sharett was prepared to consider the proposal, fearing that an unsubstantiated negative reply would not be in Israel's interests. Shiloah, on the other hand, labelled the proposal highly dangerous, while military personnel warned that the very act of negotiating with the Syrians about the demilitarized zone was an admission of their rights there. Shiloah recommended rejecting the Syrian initiative but supported direct talks on a comprehensive settlement.[24] His recommendation was adopted: the Foreign Ministry decided against outright rejection of the Syrian initiative, and instructed the Israeli representatives to demand submission of a draft agenda so that the topics for discussion could be studied beforehand.[25] Israel's conditions disappointed leading State Department officials, who looked with favour upon any step towards direct contact between Israel and its Arab neighbours and considered the Syrian initiative to be a favourable omen and evidence of a change of heart with regard to direct talks. The Israeli evaluation of the Syrian initiative, however, was that the Syrians were intent on making territorial gains by dividing the demilitarized zone, rather than interested in opening comprehensive talks between the two countries on all the outstanding issues between them. The Syrian reply — the draft agenda — was deemed unsatisfactory from Israel's point of view,[26] but the State Department continued to press it to meet the Syrians half-way. In State Department circles, the Israeli reply was interpreted as sheer obstinacy, while Syria was praised for an initiative that was the first step taken by any Arab state towards direct negotiations with Israel.[27] Israel decided to launch its own initiative, proposing an agenda that covered all outstanding issues between the two countries as well as an agreement on the framework of

23. See No. 219.
24. See Nos. 226 and 229.
25. See Editorial Note, pp. 176–77.
26. See No. 262.
27. See No. 276 (n. 1) and No. 278; see also *FRUS* 1951, V, pp. 752–53.

their future relations. Syria rejected the Israeli proposal, and the talks never took place.[28]

Despite the failure of the attempt to hold negotiations in 1951, high-ranking talks with Syria concerning partition of the demilitarized zone were held in the following years; but that is a subject for future volumes in this series.

Contacts with Jordan

The Kingdom of Jordan was the only one of Israel's neighbours with which continuous contacts were maintained, contacts that did not cease despite the failure of negotiations for an agreement between them in 1950. The initiative to renew negotiations originated with King Abdallah,[29] but this time the talks were limited to preparing an arrangement for the implementation of the armistice agreement (especially articles 6 and 8), which would lead to a comprehensive settlement.

On the Israeli side the talks were conducted by Reuven Shiloah, generally with Jordanian Prime Minister Samir al-Rifa'i, and on occasion with King Abdallah himself. In their first meeting, Shiloah and al-Rifa'i agreed to begin by offering proposals for solving the outstanding problems.[30] Once they had made their proposals, it became evident that there were serious disagreements concerning the interpretation of certain articles of the armistice agreement. Al-Rifa'i demanded that Israeli withdrawal to the international border in the Naharayim area precede any discussion of the problems raised by articles 6 and 8 of the armistice agreement. As for article 6, al-Rifa'i demanded that the villagers in the "triangle" be allowed access to their agricultural lands, which were in Israeli-occupied territory. In connection with article 8, his demands included Jordanian control of the corridor to Mount Scopus and supervision of the operation of institutions located there.[31] Israel agreed to withdraw from Naharayim, but objected to the demands regarding the villages in the "triangle" and expressed amazement at the Jordanian demand for supervisory rights on Mount Scopus —an area that had remained under exclusive Israeli sovereignty.[32]

In order to move ahead in the talks, Israel agreed to unblock funds from the frozen Arab accounts, conditional upon some progress in the negotiations. Rather than providing solutions, the exchange of notes

28. See Nos. 286, 302, and 316.
29. See No. 8 (n. 2) and No. 37.
30. See No. 83.
31. See Editorial Note, p. 169.
32. See No. 132.

between Shiloah and al-Rifa'i raised new problems, especially in connection with Mount Scopus.[33] Even the king's intervention and his attempts to find a compromise between the opposing positions did not save the negotiations, which ground to a halt even before Abdallah's murder in July. The assassination put an end to the long history of contacts between the Jewish Agency, and later the government of Israel, and the ruler of Transjordan. At the end of 1951, the future course of relations between Israel and Jordan was an unknown quantity, and Israel was preparing to meet any developments in the Hashemite Kingdom.

Israel-Egypt Relations and the Suez Canal Blockade

The relatively intensive contacts with King Abdallah were no more productive of results than the almost complete lack of communication with Egypt. Ben-Gurion and Sharett, though they supported contacts with Jordan, did not really believe at that time that there was any possibility of concluding a settlement with King Abdallah, and this opinion was held by leading Foreign Ministry officials as well. Ben-Gurion thought that the key to any settlement with the Arabs was held by the Egyptians, and conveyed this belief to State Department officials who visited the Middle East early in 1951.[34] Their description of the prevailing mood in Egypt was far from encouraging; in effect it conformed to the situation prevailing in the Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commission. The commission had been unable to resolve most of the issues between Israel and Egypt, first and foremost the problem raised by the Egyptian restrictions on the passage of goods to Israel through the Suez Canal, which had been on its agenda for over a year. In this matter, Israeli diplomacy achieved some success in 1951. In January, Gen. Riley declared the Egyptian blockade in the Suez Canal to be an act of aggression that violated the spirit of the armistice agreement, even though it was not included in the list of acts that were expressly forbidden by the agreement. In June, he stated that from a strictly technical point of view, the commission did not have the authority to issue a binding decision concerning the rights of the parties in the canal zone; he added, however, that the blockade violated the spirit of the armistice agreement. Egypt, he declared, could choose between cessation of its aggressive acts or having the matter brought to a high-level international forum such as the Security Council or the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

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33. See No. 151 (Appendix).
34. See, for example, Nos. 81 and 99; see also No. 37.

Basing itself on Gen. Riley's decision, Israel requested that the Security Council debate the Egyptian restrictions on the passage of Israeli vessels through the Suez Canal. Israel asserted that the blockade was a violation of the spirit of the armistice agreement, which expressly called for a complete and total cessation of hostile acts; furthermore, the Egyptians were also violating the Constantinople Convention and international law governing freedom of navigation. The Egyptians, for their part, argued that a state of war existed between Israel and Egypt and that in imposing a blockade in the canal they were availing themselves of the rights reserved to a belligerent.

After lodging its complaint with the Security Council, Israel engaged in intensive lobbying at the U.N. and in various capitals.[35] From the outset, Great Britain agreed to support the Israeli claim, but the United States, France, and other countries came around only gradually.[36] The United States and Turkey unsuccessfully sought ways and means to solve the problem outside the U.N., in order to prevent friction in their relations with Egypt.[37] Only after numerous failures to find such a solution did the Western powers submit a draft resolution, approved by the Security Council on 1 September. It called on Egypt to cancel the illegal restrictions it had placed on the passage of ships through the canal.[38] Egypt did not comply with the Council's ruling, and the issue of free passage through the canal continued to face Israel for many years.

The diplomatic campaign against the Suez Canal blockade did not prevent Israel from simultaneously talking with various Egyptian personalities in an attempt to ascertain the prevailing mood in Egypt *vis-à-vis* Israel. In Europe, in August 1951, Shmuel Divon of the Middle East Division of the Foreign Ministry, met Egyptians influential in government and financial circles. He learned that though there were contradictory tendencies within the Egyptian government, the prevailing mood did not look with favour upon any settlement with Israel, preferring closer ties with the Arab League and closer affinity with pan-Arab objectives. There was a group interested in clearing the air and reducing tension, but it was in the minority.[39]

During the Anglo-American negotiations to establish a Middle East Command, a favourable atmosphere was created for further exploratory moves towards an Israeli-Egyptian settlement, since a *rapprochement* between the two countries would serve the interests of such a Command and also accorded with the evaluation by Israeli leaders that

35. See Nos. 269, 299, and 326.
36. See Nos. 284 and 317.
37. See Nos. 301 and 315.
38. See Editorial Note, p. 257.
39. See Nos. 327–29 and 446.

Egypt held the key to peace with the Arabs. Hints dropped by the Chief of Staff of the UNTSO in Palestine concerning a possible change of mood in Egypt and his encouragement to begin exploratory contacts towards amending the armistice agreement as a preliminary step, before reaching a final agreement, led to a conversation between Divon and the head of the Egyptian delegation to the U.N. General Assembly. It soon became obvious that the time was not yet ripe for change. The domestic situation in Egypt and its dispute with Great Britain ruled out any move in this direction.[40] True, at the General Assembly session in Paris the Egyptian delegation did adopt a somewhat moderate stance towards Israel, but it refused to take steps "to narrow the gap",[41] as Sharett reported. The trends that began late in 1951 took an interesting turn during 1952, and will be documented in the next volume of this series.

The Refugee Problem

The Arab refugees remained on the agenda of Israel's policy-makers during 1951. Israel's fundamental principle, that the refugees could not return and that efforts should be made to rehabilitate them in their present locations, did not change over the years. The establishment of the Reintegration Fund and U.N. activity in this area did not lead towards any solution of the problem in 1951, and it remained an obstacle at the meetings of the Palestine Conciliation Commission in Paris (see below). Israel rejected the Arab demand that the refugee problem be placed on the Commission's agenda, but at a certain stage in its deliberations, as a gesture of goodwill, announced that it would be willing to open negotiations on the payment of compensation for abandoned Arab property. Israel would be willing to negotiate with an authorized U.N. agency or with the Conciliation Commission, isolating this matter from all other issues outstanding between Israel and the Arab states, if the following conditions were met: the agreement was to be of a voluntary nature; Israel should not be pressed to contribute more than a sum commensurate with its economic capability; Israel would receive international financial aid to pay the sum agreed upon; no further claims would be made against Israel; Israel's commitment would be to the U.N., not to the Arab states or the property owners; the value of the frozen assets of Iraqi Jews would be deducted from the compensation payments; Israel would honour this commitment only upon the understanding that it would not thereafter be called

40. See Nos. 472, 473, and 524.
41. See No. 535.

upon to contribute further to the solution of the Arab refugee problem, and the question of their return would no longer be raised.[42] The Israeli proposal did not meet with the expected positive reaction and did not even remove the refugee issue from the agenda of the Conciliation Commission. However, international opinion gradually came to accept the Israeli position that the refugees should be rehabilitated in their present domiciles. This tendency was reflected in the proposal brought before the Sixth General Assembly by the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for a three-year rehabilitation program. This proposal will be one of the subjects of the next volume.

The Palestine Conciliation Commission Conference in Paris

The idea of convening the Paris Conference emanated from the U.S. Department of State. This was a final attempt to exploit the existence of the Palestine Conciliation Commission as a way to break the impasse in Arab-Israeli relations. A combination of several processes and factors in the summer and autumn of 1951 led to the American initiative: internal developments in some Middle Eastern countries posed a threat to Western influence and required sympathetic gestures towards them; the need to preserve an even-handed policy towards Israel and the Arab states in the wake of the U.S. loans and grant-in-aid promised Israel; the Hula dispute, which endangered the peace of the region; the plan to establish a Middle East Command; and the forthcoming Sixth General Assembly of the United Nations.[43] In light of all these, the State Department favoured the convening of a conference that would discuss the outstanding issues between Israel and the Arab states and provide an opening for peace. The Paris Conference was not designated as a peace parley; from the outset the Americans realized that direct talks were out of the question and requested that the Conciliation Commission renew its mediation. The conference was convened without a prearranged agenda. The invitations were carefully phrased so as to prevent outright rejection. Israel accepted, albeit with reservations, not anticipating that the conference would produce any substantial result. Its structure was in obvious contradiction to the Israeli position that only direct negotiations could advance the peace process, as Israel noted in its affirmative reply to the invitation.[44]

From the start, there was little hope that the conference would achieve anything. Both sides to the dispute agreed under pressure to participate in its sessions, each having different objectives: the Arabs

42. See Editorial Note, pp. 324–26.
43. See *FRUS* 1951, V, pp. 753–55, 799.
44. See No. 375.

wished only to press for a solution of the refugee problem, putting this issue at the top of the agenda; the Israelis, on the other hand, did not expect any settlement to result from the discussions. They foresaw the pressure that the State Department would exert upon them and sought means to extricate themselves and stall for time until the Sixth General Assembly convened.[45] It was this strategy that lay behind the directives issued to the Israeli representatives to the conference: meet each Arab offensive by a countermeasure; prevent the impression that the conference was inclined to accept the Arab position; denounce the Arab refusal to negotiate directly with Israel and their rejection of the concept of peace; and make every effort to establish good relations with the members of the Conciliation Commission.

The Paris Conference lasted for two months, from 13 September to 17 November. On 17 September, the Palestine Conciliation Commission presented the sides with a list of proposed topics for discussion. The major points were: both sides confirm their intention to achieve peace; they waive raising mutual claims for war damages; return of refugees to Israeli territory on the basis of certain criteria; Israeli agreement to pay compensation for abandoned property; mutual unblocking of frozen accounts; and willingness to negotiate amendments to the armistice agreements. The replies of the parties underlined the differences between them and the difficulties involved in bridging the gap. Israel accepted the proposal to reaffirm the intention for a peaceful settlement and went further, proposing a non-aggression pact between Israel and its neighbours; at the same time, however, it reiterated its demand for direct negotiations and an agenda to which both parties had given their prior consent.[46] The Arabs, for their part, agreed to cooperate with the Commission, but made it clear that it was not authorized to discuss a peace settlement and must focus exclusively on the refugee issue. They based themselves on the General Assembly resolution of 11 December 1948 concerning the return of Arab refugees and declared that they saw no point in convening the conference, nor did they foresee any prospect for its success, unless it tackled the refugee problem.[47]

Sticking to its position, on 28 September Israel submitted to the Palestine Conciliation Commission the draft of a non-aggression pact, on the assumption that the Paris Conference could not reject a proposal phrased in the spirit of its own suggestions and conforming to the goals of the United Nations.[48] The Commission admitted that Israel's insistence on direct negotiations was logical but refused to

45. See Nos. 379 and 407.
46. See No. 396.
47. See No. 397.
48. See Nos. 404 and 407.

compel the Arabs to embark on such a process. The members claimed that it was first necessary to present the Arabs with some progress towards a solution of the refugee problem. They pressed Israel to make a gesture of goodwill by paying compensation to refugees and by agreeing to the Commission's proposals, while abandoning its obstinate insistence on direct negotiations.[49]

The Israeli proposal raised difficulties for the Commission. Its members were quite sure that the Arabs would reject it, yet they could not ignore it. To prevent the conference from ending even before it began, they decided upon an interim stratagem: they passed the Israeli proposal on to the Arab delegations and presented Israel with an Arab declaration of intention to honour the armistice agreements, to refrain from the use of force, and to recognize the rights of each party to independence and security. Though admitting that the two proposals had no points in common, the Commission nevertheless decided that the very fact that they had been presented created a favourable atmosphere for continued deliberations, proposed that they indeed continue, and received a positive reply from the Arab delegations. Israel rejected the Arab declaration, claiming that all the Arabs sought in Paris was legitimization of their continued hostility, and notified the Commission that it would not agree to negotiations as long as the Arabs refused to accept an appropriate non-aggression treaty.[50] The State Department criticized Israel's position and pressed it to advance the talks, yet at the same time admitted that the Arabs were not really seeking peace and that the chances that the Paris Conference would succeed were extremely small.[51]

On 26 October, in a last effort to save the talks, the Commission presented the parties with a memorandum clarifying its proposals and requested their reactions. The Government of Israel discussed its reply at great length. Sharett's suggestion that the Israeli note be phrased in somewhat flexible terms was rejected by Ben-Gurion and most of the ministers.[52] In its reply, the Government turned down the Commission's proposals, emphasizing that Israel had accepted the important section dealing with peaceful intentions, whereas the Arabs had rejected it, and criticized the Commission for supporting the Arab position and not pressing them to react positively to the Israeli proposal. The Arabs, too, rejected the Commission's clarifications, reiterating their demand that the refugees be repatriated and that compensation be paid for abandoned property.[53] The replies of the two parties left

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49. See No. 406.
50. See Nos. 425 and 450 (n. 1).
51. See Nos. 431 and 451.
52. See No. 467 (n. 2).
53. See Nos. 470, 488, and 489.

no reason for continued deliberations, and the Conference adjourned in mid-November. Its failure put an end to the mediation efforts of the Palestine Conciliation Commission. Israel tried to have the Commission's mandate revoked at the Sixth General Assembly, but the Great Powers preferred to continue its existence in New York.[54] The Commission's activity steadily decreased over the years and it lost all influence on the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel's policy *vis-à-vis* the Conciliation Commission and its proposal for a non-aggression treaty proved effective and extricated it from the Paris Conference without harm. Moreover, this mediation body no longer obstructed its attempts to conduct direct negotiations with its Arab neighbours.

Israel and the Western Powers

The Visit by Gen. Robertson and Relations with Great Britain

The most important event in Israel-Britain relations during the period covered by this volume was the visit to Israel by Gen. Brian Robertson, Commander-in-Chief of the British Middle East land forces, in February 1951.

The initiative for the visit was taken by the British Ministry of Defence. In the autumn of 1950 Ministry officials had already realized that Israel was becoming an important military factor in the Middle East and that its participation in a regional defence scheme against the Soviets should be assured. Gradually, the Foreign Office, too, became convinced that a move in this direction was necessary. Early in 1951, circles in both ministries came to the conclusion that Israel was in the process of abandoning its policy of non-alignment, and that public opinion in Israel was gradually escaping from the burden imposed by British policy of the recent past. In the light of this appraisal of the situation, Gen. Robertson's visit was scheduled for February 1951, earlier than originally planned.[55] The Israeli reaction was one of cautious suspicion. In exploratory talks prior to the visit, Israel learned that the British intended to request permission to establish army bases in Gaza, with an overland corridor to Jordan, or even to build bases on Israeli territory. Ben-Gurion vigorously rejected the idea, terming it "an insulting proposal".[56] Israel turned the British down cold, agreeing only to hold unofficial and secret negotiations about Middle Eastern defence plans, while stressing that such talks

54. See Nos. 509, 523, 525 (n. 2), and 527.

55. On the preparations for the visit and its results see PRO, FO371/91240, 91716.

56. See No. 18 (n. 7).

must also include a joint assessment of the means that would be provided to Israel to strengthen its economic and military position and of the possibilities of employing its industrial potential for the defence of the West.[57]

Robertson tried to fathom Israel's intentions in his two meetings with Prime Minister Ben-Gurion in Jerusalem.[58] He wanted to ascertain whether Israel would join the Western powers in the event of a Soviet threat, whether British troops would be granted wartime overland passage and overflight privileges, and whether free overflight privileges would be granted in peacetime. Ben-Gurion did not reply in the affirmative. Instead, he made it clear to Robertson that Israel would be able to contribute to the military effort only if help were forthcoming to develop and enhance its economic and military strength. He stressed the importance of peace between Israel and Egypt for the defence of the Middle East and expressed the hope that Great Britain would use its influence with the Arab states to persuade then to make peace with Israel. At their second meeting, when Gen. Robertson pressed Ben-Gurion for an explicit answer to his questions, the latter made an astonishing statement. He suggested that Israel's relationship with Great Britain during a state of emergency take the form of Britain's relations with the Commonwealth countries. He made special mention of Britain's ties with New Zealand. He did not propose that Israel join the Commonwealth, but sought a clear distinction in Britain's relations with the Arab states and with Israel. He suggested that relations between the two countries be founded on trust, equality, and their common cultural background, rather than Great Britain's treating Israel merely as a corridor and a base for British troops. Robertson was impressed by what he heard from Ben-Gurion and his report to London was couched in positive terms. The Foreign Office, too, gave serious consideration to Ben-Gurion's proposal, but deep-rooted British interests in the Arab world prevented such co-operation at the time. In the exchange of letters that followed Robertson's visit, the two parties were unable to develop the framework of their relationship in the spirit of Ben-Gurion's proposal. The British reply to the Commonwealth-type relationship was less than enthusiastic and did not relate at all to the tenor of Ben-Gurion's suggestion. It referred to a gradual evolution of ties, pointing to the historical differences between Israel and the members of the British Commonwealth.[59] Disappointed by the British reaction, Ben-Gurion cited his role in a caretaker government as the reason for delaying his

57. See No. 47.
58. See Nos. 68 and 72.
59. See No. 138.

response. Meanwhile, as details of the Western plan to incorporate Egypt into the proposed Middle East Command (see below) became known, Israel's disappointment with the Western powers increased. After the October 1951 general elections in Great Britain, won by the Conservative Party, the Israeli Government decided to reply to the British letter. The outlines of the reply were drafted in an internal consultation on 5 November.[60] In his letter, Ben-Gurion once again proposed a Commonwealth-type relationship and suggested direct negotiations on the form that Israeli-British cooperation could take, especially concerning cooperation to develop Israel's transport facilities and networks and to train and equip its armed forces.[61] The British accepted Ben-Gurion's proposal, but another year elapsed before a mission was dispatched to Israel in October 1952. During 1951 there was some progress in Israel-British relations, but the process of change was slow and drawn-out.

Israel, the United States, and the Middle East Command

During 1951, the focal points of Israeli diplomatic activity were once again Washington and New York. Contacts with the State Department, with the president, and with members of Congress, as well as at the United Nations, are documented in detail in this volume. Israel's representatives in Washington dealt with the ensemble of the issues on Israel's foreign policy agenda. Their activity reflects the state of Israel-U.S. relations throughout 1951.

Global problems and the East-West conflict determined the Middle Eastern policy of the United States and the other Western powers. Policy-makers in Washington were concerned by the spread of Communism and the threat of military entanglements that could lead to a third world war. Their policy in the Middle East was to help all countries of the region, to maintain friendly relations with all states, and to refrain from giving preferential treatment to any particular country, Israel included. Though President Truman cultivated the special friendly relationship with Israel, which also had many friends on Capitol Hill, the atmosphere in the State Department and Pentagon was often cool, and it was this inclination that influenced political decisions concerning Israel.[62]

Israel's position in the East-West conflict was put to the diplomatic test when the U.N. debated the Korean War. Israel's alignment with the Western bloc at the very outbreak of hostilities in 1950 pointed to

60. See No. 482.
61. See No. 508.
62. See *FRUS* 1951, V, pp. 564, 570, 609, 655.

a clear trend in its foreign policy, but did not as yet mark the completion of that process. Israel did not wholly identify with U.S. policy. During the Fifth General Assembly, early in 1951, Israel attempted to follow an independent policy. It sought to promote a solution of the conflict on the basis of its own experience with armistice agreements and expressed reservations about the American draft resolution calling for censure of China and the imposition of sanctions. Israel followed the British line, which was critical of the U.S. When the resolution was put to a vote, however, Israel supported censure of China but abstained on the question of sanctions.[63]

Israel's economic situation at the beginning of 1951 and the need to obtain American economic aid mandated a change in its foreign policy orientation. Israeli diplomats in the U.S., charged with persuading the Administration of the importance of a strong Israeli economy, anticipated the price that Israel would have to pay for that aid more quickly than did their superiors back home. A. Eban, T. Kollek, M. Keren, and C. Herzog were the first to realize that economic and military aid went hand in hand, and that sooner or later Israel would have to abandon its policy of nonalignment and openly align itself with the United States. They anticipated increasing American involvement in the Middle East, and accordingly recommended that Israel take early steps to ensure its role in any Western scheme for regional defence, while disregarding the opposition of pro-Soviet circles in Israel.[64] Israeli public opinion, however, was not prepared to accept such an obvious change in Israeli policy towards the East-West conflict or to sanction steps leading to a military alliance with the U.S. The Government, which faced severe domestic criticism, was forced to take internal political considerations into account when making some of its decisions.[65] Another weighty consideration was the possibility of negative Soviet reactions, especially in connection with emigration to Israel from Eastern Europe. The documents published in this volume reveal Israel's cautious support of the United States: though making it clear to the Americans that it would support the West in any crisis, Israel refrained from openly declaring its intention; it supported the West in Korea, but not without reservation; it recognized the People's Republic of China, but took no steps to establish close relations with that country. The documents allow one to follow, step by step, the process that led to Israel's growing identification with U.S. policy.

The United States played an ever-expanding role in Israel's economic reconstruction during 1951. Early in the year, Israel received a

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63. See Nos. 34 and 38.
64. See Nos. 26 and 35.
65. See Editorial Note, pp. 34–35.

35 million dollar agricultural loan from the Export-Import Bank; towards the end of the year, it was for the first time granted economic aid under the Mutual Security Law of October 1951. The negotiations relating to this grant and its size were no simple matter. The efforts by Israel's representatives in Washington continued for many months and included mobilizing the support of pro-Israel members of Congress. On the advice of some Congressmen, on 22 March Israel presented the U.S. with a request for 150 million dollars in aid for the coming fiscal year, to be used for the absorption of immigrants and the preparation of a national economic infrastructure.[66] Simultaneously, a group of senators and congressmen introduced an aid bill for the same sum. The State Department's reaction was not positive; leading officials there, and in the Pentagon, were taken aback by the scope of the support Israel had been able to mobilize in Congress. They feared that preferential aid for Israel would damage the standing of the U.S. with the Arab states and be detrimental to American strategic interests in the Middle East. They therefore began pushing their case with the President and in Congress, explaining the danger involved in passage of the grant-in-aid bill.[67]

The Administration proposed granting Israel no more than 25 million dollars, along with a similar sum for the Arab countries and Iran, and an additional 50 million dollars for the Arab refugees. The support Israel had been able to muster on Capitol Hill could not overcome the heavy pressure applied by the Administration. The outcome was a compromise: the Mutual Security Act, passed on 31 October, provided Israel with a grant of 64 million dollars, of which 50 million was earmarked for immigrant absorption; a further 50 million dollars was appropriated for the Arab refugees.

The Mutual Security Act also appropriated 39.6 million dollars in military aid to the Middle East. Such grants were made conditional upon a formal application by the requesting country and the visit of an American military mission.[68] The Foreign Minister and Israel's representatives in Washington favoured an immediate application for American military aid. They argued, *inter alia,* that such aid would make a substantial contribution to the recovery of Israel's economy, and that Israel should not be worried by the visit of an American military mission. They also forecast that the Soviet Union would understand the Israeli step and not oppose it.[69] The senior echelons of the I.D.F., however, had reservations about requesting military aid, fearing that information about Israel's defence capabilities would be revealed

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66. See Nos. 85 and 86.
67. See Nos. 106; see also *FRUS* 1951, V, pp. 609, 655–56.
68. See Nos. 409 and 517.
69. See Nos. 364, 370, 464, 506, and 514.

in the process. Other Israeli officials feared the repercussions of a request for U.S. military aid on relations with the Soviet bloc and on immigration from Eastern Europe. After much deliberation and soul-searching at the highest political and military levels, it was decided to request American military aid and take the risk of harming relations with the Communist bloc.[70]

Late in 1951, therefore, Israel's policy chalked up its first success on the road to economic stability and to economic aid from the United States. Even though the sum appropriated was not the amount originally requested, Israel's inclusion in the 1951 legislation was an economic and political achievement destined to strengthen Israel in the years to come. Immediately following enactment of the 1951 law, Israel applied for 126 million dollars in U.S. aid for fiscal 1952.

Another aspect of Israel's relationship with the United States was reflected in the Anglo-American scheme to establish a Middle East Command. Israel evinced great interest in the plan, especially in the role it was supposed to play and its integration into the Western defence framework for the region. Early in 1951 Israel had outlined its position in talks with Gen. Robertson (see above), affirming its willingness to make Israeli manpower and industrial potential available for possible military action. It soon became clear, however, that Western strategy based Middle East defence on Egypt and Turkey, and that the state of Arab-Israeli relations was a stumbling block to the establishment of the Command. Egypt was officially invited to become a founding member, while Israel was promised only that its interests would not be compromised. Israel protested,[71] but only Egypt's rejection of the Western invitation took the pressure off Israel. Despite the Egyptian refusal, the Western powers continued their efforts to establish a regional defence system, in the hope that Egypt would reconsider and join at some later date. In talks with Israel and the Arab states, they explained the principles upon which the Command would be based; they did not, however, invite them to be founding members and left them as candidates for membership at some future time.[72] Israel continued to have reservations about the proposed Command, fearing a hostile Soviet reaction — which soon materialized[73] — increased tension in domestic politics, the possibility that classified information about the I.D.F. would leak out through the Middle East Command, and the loss of Israel's military independence. After some negotiation, the Israeli position that unofficial cooperation between Israel and the Command was preferable to a contractual obligation

70. See Editorial Note, p. 368.
71. See Nos. 426, 429, and 434.
72. See No. 477.
73. See Nos. 501 and 512 ff.

was accepted by the Americans, who even agreed that Israel's acceptance of the basic premise of the proposed Command—namely, that the Soviet Union must be kept out of the Middle East—was enough to make Israel eligible for U.S. military aid.[74] The Middle East Command was not established in 1951.

Relations with France

Relations between Israel and France were not particularly warm in 1951. Despite common interests in the region, such as opposition to the Arab League and to the growth of pan-Arab sentiments, its traditional interests in Syria and the Lebanon compelled France to treat Israel with circumspection. The French representative in Tel Aviv was cool and unbending and made no great effort to promote ties with Israel; furthermore, several manifestations of hostility on his part were a source of concern to the Foreign Ministry.[75] The Hula dispute was another source of strain. The French member of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission supported the Syrian side in the dispute and was on the verge of creating a diplomatic incident with Israel. Even his removal from the scene was not enough to allay the suspicions of the top echelons in the Foreign Ministry, including Sharett himself, that the French were involved behind the scenes and were even encouraging Syrian bellicosity.[76] After the Tel al-Mutilla incident, Israel expected France to adopt a firm tone with Syria. Over time it became clear that Israel had been overly suspicious: it was not in the French interest to heat up the conflict between Israel and Syria; moreover, Paris had only limited influence in Damascus. The Quai d'Orsay transmitted a note through Israel's representative in Paris concerning the need to secure stability in the Middle East and stressing that France was not assisting the Syrians.[77] These clarifications, however, were not enough to generate confidence in the French attempts to mediate between Syria and Israel, especially since France supported the Syrian demand for partition of the demilitarized zone.[78] The French initiative was soon nullified by the American proposal to convene the Conciliation Conference in Paris. The Conference's American chairman afforded little opportunity for independent action by the French delegate or for French influence on the course of the Conference and its results.

74. See Nos. 491, 495, 498, and 503.
75. See Nos. 57 and 148.
76. See Nos. 160 and 164.
77. See No. 167.
78. See Nos. 217, 248, and *ibid.*, n. 1.

In the realm of military procurement, relations between France and Israel were a harbinger of the positive relationship that would develop in the years to come. France supplied Israel with Mosquito planes,[79] which contributed to the development of the Israel Air Force. Economic relations with France also took a positive turn: Israel received a 26 million dollar loan at a moment of severe financial crisis.

German Reparations

The year 1951 was decisive for the German reparations issue. At its outset, the Government of Israel took the fateful decision to direct a request to the occupation authorities that Germany make reparation payments and return confiscated Jewish property. By the end of 1951 the groundwork had been laid for formal negotiations between the governments of Israel and West Germany. Official Israeli diplomatic activity concentrated on an exchange of notes with the occupying powers, but at the same time Israel also evinced growing interest in German feelers about the possibility of direct negotiations. The documents presented in this volume illustrate the slow, complex, and emotion-fraught process that culminated in direct negotiations with Germany concerning reparations. It began with the Government decision of 3 January to raise the subject with the occupying powers. This was a compromise between the Foreign Ministry's proposal for direct talks with the German authorities and the uncompromising opposition of several ministers to any contact with the Germans over reparations.

Following that decision, Israel dispatched a note to the occupying powers on 16 January in which it listed the different categories of reparation payments and requested that the occupation authorities take steps to improve reparations legislation in the zones under their jurisdiction, to ensure that the General Claims Law of 1 April 1949 apply to all of Germany, and to solve the problem of foreign currency transfers from Germany.[80] Pursuant to a further government decision, on 12 March Israel dispatched a detailed memorandum to the occupying powers, describing the atrocities perpetrated by the German nation against the Jews since the Nazis' rise to power. The memorandum included Israel's demand for 1.5 billion dollars to cover the absorption of 500,000 survivors of Nazi persecution who had immigrated to Israel, or \$3,000 per person.[81] The memorandum was addressed to the occupying powers but was really meant for the German authorities and indeed served as the basis for all further negotia-

79. See No. 207.
80. See No. 19.
81. See No. 84.

tions with them. Germany's reaction to the memorandum was immediate and confidential. The moment its content became public knowledge, the German government discussed the subject and decided to initiate negotiations with Israel. It notified Israel through unofficial channels that Chancellor Adenauer wished to meet Israeli representatives. This news was received with satisfaction by the Foreign Ministry, which immediately began to take practical steps. The meeting with Adenauer was held in Paris on 19 April.[82] He seemed extremely eager to open negotiations, but the Israeli representatives raised two prior conditions before talks could get underway: (a) "solemn official public acknowledgment" by Germany of "guilt, repudiation of crimes", and a "request for forgiveness"; (b) *a priori* acceptance of the Israeli claim for a 1.5 billion dollar payment as the basis for negotiations. Adenauer accepted the first condition immediately. As for the second one, he expressed his willingness to raise the question with his government and did not foresee any difficulties in this connection. Thus ended the first stage in Israel-German negotiations.

The first draft of the German declaration had been completed by July 1951, but the text was finalized only in September. Israeli officials and representatives of the Jewish organizations that had been working for reparations payments since the end of the war were actively involved in drafting the text of the declaration, to ensure its acceptance in Israel and by world Jewry. The major obstacle was how to phrase Germany's admission of guilt. The Jewish negotiators demanded an unequivocal statement declaring that the whole German people was responsible for the Nazi crimes. Adenauer, fearing domestic opposition to the initiative that he had entered upon, insisted that the declaration refer to the majority, not the whole, of the German nation. On 27 September, Adenauer made his statement in the Bundestag. West Germany admitted that responsibility for Nazi crimes lay with the majority of the German nation and recognized its obligation to make moral and financial indemnity to the Jewish people, within the limits of Germany's economic capacity. That same day, Israel declared its willingness to consider the German declaration, thus taking another step towards direct negotiations with Germany.[83]

At Israel's initiative, a Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (better known as the Claims Conference) was convened in New York on 26 October. The Conference supported Israel's demand for reparations and agreed to give it precedence in negotiations with the German government. The Conference's decisions paved the way for an official meeting with Adenauer. Though Ben-Gurion

82. See Nos. 109, 114, 171, and *ibid.*, n. 1.
83. See No. 403 and Editorial Note, pp. 287–88.

and Sharett recognized the importance of the meeting, the mission was assigned to Nahum Goldmann, chairman of the Jewish Agency and also of the Claims Conference, due to a prior undertaking by the Government that it would not engage in negotiations with Germany before the issue was raised in the Knesset. Goldmann demanded Government backing and set out only after clarifying the matter personally with Ben-Gurion.[84] He met Adenauer in London on 6 December. Following their meeting, Adenauer dispatched a letter to Goldmann stating that the time was ripe for negotiations on reparations payments, and that the government of West Germany was prepared to accept Israel's claim for 1.5 billion dollars as the basis for negotiation. He added that Germany looked with favour upon the possibility that it would supply the materiel necessary for the upbuilding of the State of Israel.[85] This marked the end of the diplomatic preparations for the opening of talks that led to the Reparations Agreement between Israel and Germany. The time had come to bring the matter before the Knesset and receive the approval of the Israeli people. This dramatic stage, which began early in 1952, will be one of the subjects of the next volume of documents.

Israel and Eastern Europe

During 1951, Israel's relations with Eastern European countries, excluding the Soviet Union, focused on the issue of *aliya*. At the beginning of the year Poland unexpectedly stopped issuing emigration visas to Jews, thereby putting an end to the wave of mass immigration from that country. The efforts of Israel's representatives in Warsaw to renew the departure of Jews, or at least to understand what had motivated the Polish action, were to no avail.[86] Hungary and Czechoslovakia had closed their borders to Jews wishing to emigrate to Israel even before 1951. Efforts by Israeli diplomats to effect the exit of small, select groups—including the 3000 Hungarian Jews who had received emigration permits in 1949 — also proved unsuccessful.[87] Only from Rumania did a stream of immigrants continue to flow, until the spring of 1952, and there were flourishing trade relations between the two countries, even though they had not signed a commercial treaty. A change for the worse in Israel's relations with Eastern European countries occurred towards the end of

84. See Nos. 486, *ibid.*, n. 1, and No. 500.
85. See Nos. 515 and 518.
86. See Nos. 30 (n. 3), 101, 282, and 424.
87. See Nos. 46, 51, and 61.

the year. The first sign came from Czechoslovakia, following the arrest of Rudolf Slanský; the wave of anti-Semitism which swept that country gradually spread to the other members of the Soviet bloc.

Israel's relations with the Soviet Union involved more than just the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and also touched on the East-West conflict. Though the emigration question was raised from time to time in diplomatic talks conducted by Israel's representatives in Moscow,[88] it was not a central issue in these discussions. The meetings between Israeli and Soviet diplomats in New York and Moscow did not signal any change in the Soviet attitude towards the State of Israel. The U.S.S.R. abstained in the Security Council votes on the Hula dispute and the Egyptian blockade of the Suez Canal. The Western proposal to establish a Middle East Command strained relations between the two states. After the Western powers invited Israel to join the proposed Command, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko sent Israel a *note verbale* on 21 November.[89] He vigorously attacked the proposal to establish a Middle East Command, warning Israel that its participation "would cause serious damage to the relations existing between the U.S.S.R. and Israel as well as to the preservation of peace and security in the Near and Middle East." In its reply of 5 December, Israel explained that the Command had no aggressive intentions and that Israel would not support "aggressive acts or preparations against the Soviet Union or any other peace-loving country." Israel denied rumours that foreign military bases would be established on its territory or in the region, and reiterated its desire "to maintain cordial relations with the Soviet Union." In this note, Israel also requested that the Soviet government allow Jews to emigrate to Israel, expressing its belief that such a request was consistent with Soviet policy concerning the right of every national group to self-determination.[90]

Israel and the Far East

Advancement of relations with the Far East was not a major concern of Israeli diplomacy in the third year of independence. Economic considerations, political reasons, and, perhaps, cultural remoteness played a role in delaying the establishment of relations with states of the region.

Yaacov Shimoni, Director of the Asia Division of the Foreign Ministry, urged his superiors to take steps towards the establishment of

88. See Nos. 275 and 383.
89. See No. 501.
90. See No. 521.

diplomatic relations with Far Eastern countries. He believed that Israel had more to gain from relations with such countries as India, Thailand, Burma, and even Indonesia than those states would have from their relationship with Israel. He therefore recommended that Israel deviate from the accepted practice of mutuality at every stage of the process and unilaterally open legations whenever that step would best serve Israeli interests. He prepared a detailed proposal for the establishment of relations with the Far Eastern countries and recommended that Israel change its attitude towards Japan.[91] After the peace treaty with Japan was signed in September 1951, the way was open for its integration into the U.N. and its agencies and for the establishment of regular relations with other countries. Full diplomatic relations between Japan and Israel were established in mid-1952.

In the spirit of Shimoni's recommendations, the Foreign Ministry took steps towards the establishment of diplomatic relations with India. Late in 1951 Ben-Gurion dispatched a special note to Prime Minister Nehru, requesting that he allow the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry to visit India and that he receive him.[92] The visit, which took place in March 1952, will be one of the subjects of the next volume of documents.

A completely different case was the question of relations with the People's Republic of China, connected, as it was, with the issue of the Korean War the East-West conflict. Israel had recognized Communist China early in 1950, supported its membership in the United Nations, and was even preparing to establish a legation in Peking; but these plans were shelved at the outbreak of hostilities in Korea. Sharett was extremely wary of Israel's relations with China, fearing a negative reaction from the United States, and therefore declined to act upon the plans and suggestions of several senior Foreign Ministry officials who proposed more intensive contacts and that Israel take steps to establish diplomatic relations.[93]

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During its third year of independence, the State of Israel made no progress towards a state of peace with its neighbours. Though the issue of peace was always on the national agenda, it would seem that the experience of the past had gradually brought about acquiescence

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91. See Nos. 126, 294, and 437.
92. See No. 526.
93. See Nos. 65, *ibid.*, n. 1, 182, and 494.

in the *status quo* and recognition of the fact that peace was not immediately attainable and was, at best, a hope for the future. Perusal of the many Israeli, American, and British documents dealing with peace between Israel and the Arabs reveals that in 1951 neither side was preoccupied with the issue of peace, both accepting the *status quo* as a fact of life.

American and British diplomats and officials stationed in the Middle East, or who visited the area during 1951, reported that they found little interest in the Arab states in the achievement of a peace settlement.[94] Dispatches from Syria and Egypt reported that those countries viewed mass immigration to Israel with concern, fearing that it might push Israel to territorial expansion. Moreover, the Arabs were wary of any process that would finalize their present borders with Israel, claiming that only border rectifications could ensure them against Israeli aggression. The mind set in the Arab world left little hope for a change in conceptions, and domestic instability discouraged Arab leaders from deviating from accepted policy, lest they be overthrown. The Arab states even accused the superpowers of supporting Israel and its aggressive activities.[95]

In Israel, too, a peace settlement with the Arabs did not receive priority on the national agenda. Israel was in no hurry, for it was commonly agreed that the price of peace should be paid by the Arab states. In 1951, Israel did not see its way clear to making any concessions to the Arabs, certainly not to agreeing to their demands, which threatened to amputate parts of its territory and undermine its security. These demands included the removal of the southern Negev and half of the Sea of Galilee from Israeli jurisdiction, and the return of the Arab refugees.

Whether Israel could break out of the stalemate, and how this should be done, was uppermost in the minds of several senior Foreign Ministry officials involved in the day-to-day diplomatic activity, who sought new paths—or at least new ideas—to break out of the vicious circle. Some of them even criticized the Foreign Minister and senior policy-makers for their handling of the Arab-Israeli issue. Prominent among these was Eliahu Sasson who, early in 1951, proposed that the Ministry hold an extensive consultation on this issue to see where Israel had erred and what steps could be taken to ameliorate the situation.[96] Sasson requested that the Arab issue be given the highest priority and that it be tackled with constant soul-searching and drawing of conclusions so that a way out of the stalemate could be found. In

94. See Nos. 81 and 99; see also *FRUS* 1951, V, p. 678.
95. See PRO FO/371/91381, 91368.
96. See Nos. 144, *ibid.*, n. 1, and No. 146.

several incisive letters, Sasson criticized the manner in which the Arab-Israeli issue was being handled, even going so far as to accuse the senior echelons in the Ministry of serious oversights and mistakes.[97] Sasson was not alone in his criticism. Other diplomats were sometimes highly critical of policy and supported his proposals.[98] In refuting the criticism levelled by ministry officials, especially by Sasson, Sharett pointed out that the Foreign Ministry had not abandoned efforts to achieve peace with the Arabs and had given serious consideration to every practical suggestion that had been raised over the years.[99]

Sharett was no less involved than his subordinates in the efforts to make peace with the Arabs and was just as concerned as they were by the ongoing state of belligerency. As a politician, however, he fully understood, much better than they could, that the domestic political situation limited the freedom of action of the coalition government headed by his party. All the same, the internal criticism within the Foreign Ministry is a sign of dynamic thinking and continuous self-examination, a tendency worthy of note in any historical analysis of why peace between Israel and the Arab states was not achieved.

Yemima Rosenthal

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97. See Nos. 146, 169, 223, and 279.
98. See Nos. 152, 202, and 264.
99. See No. 223, *ibid.*, n. 1, and No. 245.

List of Documents, Editorial Notes, and Main Subjects

40. 31 January **M. Sasson to M. Sharett** (Hebrew)
Meeting with al-Karmi: Compensation of property-owning Arab refugees; Rifa'i's conditions for a settlement with Israel.

Appendix: Comments on compensation policy (Hebrew).

41. 31 January **Meeting: A. Eban–G. C. McGhee**
Israel, the United States, and the defence of the Middle East.

42. 31 January **E. Sasson to S. Divon**
Meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister.

43. 1 February **A. Eban to E. Elath** (Telegram)
U.N. resolution on Korea.

44. 2 February **A. Eban to the United States Division** (Telegram)
Meeting with U.S. Congressmen: Preparations for grant-in-aid bill.

45. 2 February **M. Keren to the United States Division** (Hebrew)
Meeting with L. Jones.

46. 2 February **S. Eliashiv to the East European Division** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Meeting with the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs: *Aliya* from Czechoslovakia.

47. 2 February **Working Paper: Outline of E. Elath's Reply to Sir William Strang**
Israel's reaction to British feelers regarding the Middle East defence plan.

48. 5 February **M. Sharett to S. Eliashiv** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Directions for anticipated meetings with the Egyptian chargé d'affaires in Prague.

49. 5 February **M. Shalit to Z. Aranne** (Hebrew)
Israel-U.S. relations and public opinion in Israel.

50. 5 February **S. Bendor to the United States Division** (Hebrew)
Meeting of Israel's military attachés abroad.

51. 7 February **S. Eliashiv to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Meeting with Berey: *Aliya* from Hungary.

8 February **Editorial Note**
Government discussion on relations with Germany.

52. 9 February **E. Elath to M. Comay** (Telegram)
Meeting with L. Jones: Defence of the Middle East.

53. 9 February **E. Elath to M. Comay** (Telegram)
Meeting with Sir William Strang: Defence of the Middle East.

224.	15 June	**A. Eban to M. Sharett** (Telegram) Explanation of early publication in New York of Israel's reaction to Riley's ruling concerning the Suez Canal blockade.
225.	15 June	**A. Eban to the United States Division** (Telegram) Meeting with McGhee: Delay of arms supply; Hula; Suez.
226.	15 June	**R. Shiloah to M. Sharett** (Hebrew) Shiloah's opposition to negotiations with the Syrians on the future of the demilitarized zone.
227.	17 June	**S. Bendor to the Israel Embassy in Washington** (Hebrew) The Jerusalem issue: Preparations for the U.N. General Assembly; transfer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Jerusalem.
228.	17 June	**Memorandum by M. Bartur** (Hebrew) Israel's trade prospects in view of U.S. efforts to prohibit export of essential commodities to the Eastern Bloc.
229.	19 June	**S. Bendor to A. Eban** (Hebrew) Syrian proposal for direct negotiations with the Foreign Ministry on the demilitarized zone.
230.	20 June	**G. Avner to M. Fischer** Instructions for reaction to the French peace initiative.
231.	20 June	**E. Zippori to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations** (Hebrew) Japan's admission to U.N. bodies.
232.	22 June	**M. Comay to W. Eytan** (Hebrew) The Suez Canal blockade and the Arab boycott.
233.	22 June	**A. Eban to R. Shiloah** (Hebrew) Israel-U.S. relations in the light of the Hula dispute.
234.	22 June	**W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington** (Telegram) Repatriation of Arabs evacuated from the demilitarized zone.
235.	24 June	**W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington** (Telegram) The dangers to Israel inherent in the French peace initiative.
236.	24 June	**M. Comay to E. Elath** Meeting with E. Shinwell: Arms supply from Britain; reaction to the French Peace initiative.

426. 13 October **W. Eytan to the Israel Missions Abroad** (Telegram)
Three Powers' memorandum on the Middle East Command.

427. 13 October **M. Sharett to W. Eytan** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Endeavours by the Embassy in Washington to ease the financial crisis in Israel.

428. 14 October **M. Fischer to E. E. Palmer**
Israel's position at the Paris Conciliation Conference.

429. 14 October **W. Eytan to the Israel Missions Abroad** (Telegram)
Supreme Allied Command, Middle East (SACME).

430. 14 October **A. Biran to W. Eytan** (Hebrew)
Meeting with the director-general of the Jordanian Foreign Ministry: Conciliation Commission; Jerusalem; King Talal; prospects for peace; Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission.

431. 15 October **A. Eban to W. Eytan (Telegram)**
Meeting with McGhee: Egypt and the Middle East Command; Paris Conciliation Conference; Israel's financial situation.

432. 15 October **A. Eban to D. Ben-Gurion** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Egypt and the Middle East Command; Eban's recommendation for an active Israel's policy against the Suez Canal blockade.

433. 15 October **A. Eban to M. Sharett** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Proposal for a public relations campaign in the United States against the Suez blockade.

434. 15 October **Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion–M. B. Davis**
Middle East Command.

435. 16 October **W. Eytan to the Israel Missions in New York and Paris** (Telegram)
Coordination of Israel's policy towards the Paris Conciliation Conference.

436. 16 October **M. Sharett to W. Eytan** (Telegram)
Sharett's meeting with McGhee: Reasons why Western Powers approached Egypt to join the Middle East Command.

437. 16 October **Y. Shimoni to W. Eytan** (Hebrew)
Relations of Israel with Asian states.

438. 17 October **A. Eban to W. Eytan** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Supply of foodstuffs from the United States.

439. 17 October **M. Fischer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Paris Conciliation Conference.

522. 10 December **A. Eban to D. Ben-Gurion and M. Sharett** (Telegram, Hebrew))
Background of the U.S. request that Israel send a military contingent to Korea; Eban's conclusions and suggestions for Israel's reaction.

523. 10 December **M. Sharett to A. Eban** (Telegram)
Future of the Conciliation Commission.

524. 12 December **S. Divon to W. Eytan** (Hebrew)
Egypt-Israel relations; the Arab League, the Arab states, and the Middle East Command.

525. 15 December **A. Eban to M. Sharett and W. Eytan** (Telegram)
Meeting at the Department of State: Department of Defense request for dispatch of an Israeli contingent to Korea; the future of the Conciliation Commission.

526. 18 December **D. Ben-Gurion to J. Nehru** (Telegram)
Eytan's visit to India—confirmation of arrangements.

527. 18 December **M. Sharett to W. Eytan and the Israel Embassy in Washington** (Telegram)
Future of the Conciliation Commission.

528. 18 December **Meeting: M. Sharett–R. Schuman** (Hebrew)
U.N. General Assembly; future of the Conciliation Commission.

529. 18 December **A. Eban to D. Ben-Gurion and M. Sharett** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Meeting at the Department of State: Expression of regret at Ben-Gurion's criticism of U.S. Jewry.

530. 18 December **M. Sharett to W. Eytan** (Telegram)
American pressure on Israel to support the election of Greece to the Security Council.

531. 19 December **M. Sharett to W. Eytan, E. Elath and D. Goitein** (Telegram)
Future of the Conciliation Commission.

532. 20 December **Meeting: A. Lourie–A. Kyrou**
Israel-Greece relations.

533. 21 December **Israel Legation in Prague to the East European Division** (Telegram, Hebrew)
Anti-semitic incidents following Slanský's arrest in Prague.

24 December **Editorial Note**
Discussion and decision on Israel's request for American military assistance.

534. 29 December **M. Shalit to R. Shiloah** (Telegram)
Request for intervention by the State Department on behalf of Iraqi Jews condemned to death.

535. 30 December **M. Sharett to W. Eytan** (Hebrew)
Results of attempts at direct negotiations with Egypt; analysis of the idea of using the Armistice agreements to further peace.

536. 31 December **M. Sasson to the Bureau of the Minister of Foreign Affairs** (Hebrew)
Meeting with the Jordanian representative to the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission.

LIST OF ARCHIVES AND ABBREVIATIONS IN REFERENCES

Israel State Archives

93. *Record Group: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel Missions Abroad*

- 93.01 Coded telegrams
- 93.02 Paris
- 93.03 New York
- 93.04 London
- 93.08 Washington

130. *Record Group: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Head Office*

- 130.02 Offices of the Minister and the Director-General
- 130.03 International Organizations Division
- 130.04 Legal Division
- 130.09 Coded telegrams
- 130.10 West European Division
- 130.11 East European Division
- 130.13 British Commonwealth Division
- 130.15 Middle East Division
- 130.16 Armistice Affairs Division
- 130.20 United States Division

105. *Office of the President of the State*

Central Zionist Archives (Abbreviated reference: C.Z.A.)

A245 *Moshe Sharett—Private Archives*

Israel Military and Defence Establishment Archives
(Abbreviated reference: IMDEA)

Public Record Office (Abbreviated reference: PRO)

FO371 *Foreign Office, General Correspondence, Political*

Abbreviations in Editorial Headings and References

Inc.	Incoming text
Orig.	Original
Outg.	Outgoing text
Recd	Received
Tel.	Telegram

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS IN REFERENCES

Note: The list includes only books and publications mentioned in the annotation.

A. General

Divrei Ha-Knesset [Knesset Reports], Third Session of the First Knesset, 1951, Vol. VII [Hebrew]

Divrei Ha-Knesset [Knesset Reports], Third Session of the First Knesset, 1951, Vol. VIII [Hebrew]

Divrei Ha-Knesset [Knesset Reports], Third Session of the First Knesset, 1951, Vol. IX [Hebrew]

Divrei Ha-Knesset [Knesset Reports], First Session of the Second Knesset, 1952, Vol. X [Hebrew]

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, Vol. V, Washington, 1978 (Abbreviated reference: *FRUS,* 1950, V)

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951, Vol. V, Washington, 1982 (Abbreviated reference: *FRUS,* 1951, V)

State of Israel, Israel State Archives. *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel, Vol. 1, May–September 1948,* Jerusalem, 1981 (Abbreviated reference: Vol. I)

State of Israel, Israel State Archives. *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel, Vol. 3, Armistice Negotiations with the Arab States, December 1948–July 1949,* Jerusalem, 1983 (Abbreviated reference: Vol. 3)

State of Israel, Israel State Archives. *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel, Vol. 4, May–December 1949,* Jerusalem, 1986 (Abbreviated reference: Vol. 4)

State of Israel, Israel State Archives. *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel, Vol. 5, 1950,* Jerusalem, 1988 (Abbreviated reference: Vol. 5)

State of Israel, Israel State Archives. *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel, Vol. 5, 1950,* Jerusalem, 1988 (Abbreviated reference: Vol. 5)

B. United Nations Publications

United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Plenary Meetings. Verbatim Records of Meetings,* Vol. 1, 1950 (Abbreviated reference: *GAOR, Fifth Session, Plenary*)

United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, First Committee, Political and Security Questions Including Regulations of Armaments, Summary Records of Meetings,* Vol. 1, 20 September–13 December 1950 (Abbreviated reference: *GAOR, Fifth Session, First Committee*)

United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Annexes,* 1950 (Abbreviated reference: *GAOR, Fifth Session, Annexes*)

United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 20A* (A/1775/Add. 1) (Abbreviated reference: *GAOR, Fifth Session, Supplement*)

United Nations, *Security Council Official Records, Sixth Year* (Abbreviated reference: *SCOR, Sixth Year*)

United Nations, *Security Council Official Records, Sixth Year, Supplement for 1 April through 30 June 1951* (Abbreviated reference: *SCOR, Sixth Year, Supplement*)

United Nations, *Security Council Official Records, Sixth Year, Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council,* 1951 (Abbreviated reference: *SCOR, Sixth Year, Resolutions and Decisions*)

NOTES
AND SUMMARIES OF
HEBREW DOCUMENTS

All summaries of Hebrew documents and all notes are arranged chronologically, i.e., according to the numbers of the documents in the Main Volume. The notes are translated in full, even those pertaining to passages that are omitted in the summaries; in this case, the call numbers to notes are also omitted in the summaries.
Editorial headings of Hebrew documents are reproduced in full, while headings to translations of notes to documents in English or French are given in a shortened version. Where no notes are appended, the English and French documents are represented by headings only. Editorial Notes appear in the same order as in the Main Volume, preceding the relevant document.

Editorial Note

Ben-Gurion's speech in the Knesset

Ben-Gurion presented the Civil Defence Bill to the Knesset on 2 January for its first reading. He took the opportunity to comment on the security situation and the place of security affairs in Israel's political and social system. He spoke of Arab hostility and desire to destroy Israel as a decisive factor in determining Israel's defence policy, and stressed Israel's role in the global struggle between East and West. According to Ben-Gurion, Israel belongs to a bloc of nations not "subordinate *a priori* to any side"; as such, Israel could "be a factor in the strengthening of world peace". He said that Israel could protect itself in the event of either a world war or an Arab attack, declaring, "We are capable of defending our existence, our independence, our sovereignty, and our internal and external freedom in case of world conflict . . . or a second round with the Arabs." Ben-Gurion presented three prerequisites for Israel's security: immigration, settlement and industrial development. He especially stressed the importance of the intrinsic moral strength of Israel's citizens, and criticized "the spiritual and moral disintegration spreading through our public" (*Divrei ha-Knesset*, Third Session of the First Knesset, Volume VII, pp. 652–57).

1. D. Ben-Gurion (Tel Aviv) to A. Eban[1] (Washington). 2 January 1951

Coded Tel. IWA71; Outg.: 130.09/2308/15

Ben-Gurion reports on the "desperate" situation of wheat and grain supply in Israel: "By the end of February there will be no bread. By the end of January there will be no supplies for poultry runs".

Demands an immediate shipment of 50,000 tons of wheat, and suggests sending Harman[3] to Canada for this purpose.[4]

Notes

1. Abba Eban, Israel Ambassador in Washington and Israel Permanent Representative at the U.N.
2. Eliezer Kaplan, Minister of Finance.
3. Avraham Harman, Counsellor and Director of Information Services at the Israel Embassy in Washington and at the Israel Consulate in New York.
4. In response, Eban wired, "20,000 tons of wheat were purchased in the past few days. We are making great efforts to hurry shipment so that at least some of it reaches Israel by the end of February, and we still have not completed negotiations on the matter. We will be able to purchase wheat and grain from the United States government, but there is a severe shortage of ships and bags. . . . Thus far we have not received any money from Israel for these purchases" (Eban's cable to Ben-Gurion, WIA562, 3 January 1951, 93.01/2207/12).

Editorial Note

U.N. Debate on Korea

On 31 December 1950, North Korea, supported by forces of the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.), launched a massive attack on South Korea. In a matter of days they had succeeded in taking Seoul and routing U.N. and South Korean forces along the 38th parallel.

This offensive was waged in the face of feverish United Nations efforts to end the war. On 14 December the General Assembly passed a resolution instructing the President of the Assembly to establish a three-member committee that would lay the groundwork for a cease-fire (see Vol. 5, Editorial Note, p. 696). The committee, established and chaired by the President with the participation of the Canadian and Indian representatives, unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate with the P.R.C. on several occasions. On 2 January, it informed the U.N. First (Political) Committee of its failure, and presented a report of its activities. The First (Political) Committee discussed the report in its sessions of 3, 5, and 8 January 1951.

Israel's delegation participated actively in the U.N. debates on Korea and in behind-the-scenes diplomatic activity. As early as December 1950 it had circulated to several delegations a working paper containing a proposal for resolving the conflict, calling for an immediate cease-fire, a phased withdrawal of foreign forces, and a U.N.-arbitrated solution (see Vol. 5, No. 498 and n. 1 *ibid.*, and No. 500). In January 1951 the delegation presented this working paper to the

President of the Assembly and to the representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, India, Canada and Sweden as a five-point plan for ending the conflict (see Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 190, 14 January 1951, 93.08/341/63). In view of the positive response with which the plan was greeted, Eban presented it to the Political Committee on 5 January as a recommended basis for discussion. (See Eban's cable to Eytan, X767, 93.01/2203/3.) The British representative expressed support for the Israeli proposal in his speech of 8 January, but the Soviet representative rejected it. The first session of committee deliberations ended inconclusively.

The First (Political) Committee resumed its deliberations on 11 January, concentrating on the plan presented by the three-member committee, which was similar to the Israeli one. The First (Political) Committee proposed a five-point scheme calling for a gradual cease-fire, the establishment of a united, independent Korea, and comprehensive settlement of problems in the Far East. The Israeli delegation, encouraged by British support for its plan, did not abandon it; instead it sought to win the support of British Commonwealth countries and other Western nations (see Nos. 9 and 14). However, only on 12 January, after U.S. State Department officials informed Eban of their government's approval of the cease-fire plan, and after being openly approached by American, British and Indian delegations, did Eban present the First (Political) Committee with Israel's proposal for a resolution of the Korean War. (See Editorial Note, p. 15, and No. 16.) Although the proposal was discussed in committee and several modifications were presented, Israel eventually withdrew it in favour of the Norwegian resolution, which was similar in content. The Norwegian proposal was ratified on 13 January by a majority of 45 to 5, with 9 abstentions. (See *GAOR, 5th Sess., First Committee,* 419th–425th Meetings, 3, 5, 8, 11–13 January 1951, pp. 459–500.)

2. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 3 January 1951

Notes

1. H. M. Gladwyn Jebb, the British Permanent Representative at the U.N. Eban met with Jebb on 2 January 1951 and heard his encouraging response to Israel's proposal for resolving the Korean conflict. Jebb promised to cable the Israeli proposal to Bevin. In the talks, Jebb said his government was not convinced that China was being used as a Soviet tool, but added that in any event there would have to be a response to the American demand to condemn China. (See Eban's cable to Eytan, X747; to Elath, U48, 2 January 1951, 93.01/2203/3.)
2. Arthur Lourie, Israel Consul-General in New York and Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.N.

3. Ernest A. Gross, U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.N.
4. John C. Ross, Member of the U.S. Permanent Delagation to the U.N. and U.S. Deputy Representative at the Security Council.
5. Gideon Rafael, Counsellor of the Israel Permanent Delegation to the U.N.
6. Yakov A. Malik, Soviet Joint Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Soviet Permanent Representative at the U.N..
7. Sir Benegal N. Rau, Indian Permanent Representative at the U.N.
8. Cf. Vol. 5, No. 500. For the American position, see also Lourie's cable to the Foreign Ministry, X761, 5 November 1951, 93.01/2203/3.
9. 31 December. See previous Editorial Note.
10. Semen K. Tsarapkin, Soviet Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.N.
11. Lester B. Pearson, Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs and Head of the Delegation to the Fifth Session of U.N. General Assembly.
12. Walter Eytan, Director-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Editorial Note

Cabinet Debate on Israel Restitutions Claim from Germany

On 3 January the Cabinet discussed the Foreign Ministry's proposal that a delegation be sent to the Occupying Forces in Germany for the purpose of negotiating reparations payments. The debate was pursuant to one held in the Cabinet on 27 December 1950, at which no decision was made (see Vol. 5, No. 522; *ibid.*, note 3). W. Eytan, presenting the Ministry's proposal, pressed for an immediate decision, explaining that this was the last opportunity to approach the Occupying Forces before the state of occupation came to an end. He made it clear that the delegation would make no contacts with the German government once the occupation ended.

The Cabinet was divided over the proposal. Rosen, Kaplan and Shapira supported it, Shitrit and Maimon opposed any action, and Remez, Myerson and Lavon had reservations, preferring that Israel approach representatives of the Great Powers in their respective capitals. Two votes on the Ministry's proposal ended in ties of 5:5, and it was rejected. Another proposal, calling for the establishment of a special company with governmental support, to press claims against Germany and collect reparations, was also not adopted, the vote ending in a 5:5 tie.

By a majority (seven in favour), the Cabinet passed the following resolution: "Israel's representatives will approach the central governments of the Occupying Forces to secure German reparations and the restitution of Jewish property."

3. Y. Tekoah[1] (Tel Aviv) to W. Eytan. 4 January 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2417/1

Tekoah expresses concern about recent developments regarding Israel's demands for German reparations. He believes the recent government decision enables Israel to present the Occupying Powers with a memorandum as to her reparations claim,[2] and, perhaps, to send a delegation to Germany. He fears, however, that it will be impossible on the basis of the government decision to instruct the delegation to make direct contact with the German authorities. Tekoah believes that in light of existing relations between the Occupying Powers and the German authorities, it would probably not be desirable to focus diplomatic efforts on approaching the occupation authorities. If Israel's political goal is to press the reparations claim, her attitude towards Germany should be modified; Germany should be considered not only as a country under occupation but as a political entity whose dependence on the Occupying Powers is drawing to a close. Tekoah suggests implementing the Foreign Ministry's decision in favour of sending to Germany a delegation empowered to negotiate directly with the German authorities. In this context, he refers Eytan to Paragraphs E and F in Rosenne's memorandum on the Three Powers' declaration of 24 October 1950.[3]

Notes

1. Yosef Tekoah, Assistant Legal Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Between January and June 1951, in I.D.F. Intelligence Branch.
2. See No. 19.
3. In Section 5 of the document Rosenne concludes that "The government must immediately come to a clear-cut decision about maintaining direct contacts with the German government as regards realizing our claims, even if this means we must send a high-level delegation to that government". In Section 6 Rosenne reached the same conclusion with respect to East Germany (Rosenne to Foreign Minister's Bureau, 30 November 1951, 130.04/1808/11).

4. E. Sasson to W. Eytan. 4 January 1951

Notes

1. Eliahu Sasson, Israel Minister to Turkey.
2. The date is erroneously marked both here and at the top of the letter, and should be 1951.

3. Sophocles Venizelos, Greek Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.
4. Ben-Gurion spent an unofficial holiday in Greece between 29 November and 19 December 1950. He met the Greek Prime Minister for an unofficial talk dealing mainly with historical and philosophical subjects. (See Ben-Gurion's diary, 19 December 1950, IMDEA.)
5. See Editorial Note, p. 3.
6. Aluf Moshe Dayan, Commanding Officer, Southern Command. On his visit to Ankara, see Vol. 5, No. 521.
7. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5.
8. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Europe.

5. A. Eban to W. Eytan (Telegram). 5 January 1951

Notes

1. Reference is to the $35,000 agricultural loan provided by the Export-Import Bank of Washington and signed by Israeli representatives.
2. Oscar Gass, Economic Adviser to the Israel Finance Ministry in the U.S.A.
3. Herbert E. Gaston, Chairman of Board of Directors and President, Export-Import Bank of Washington.
4. Jefferson Caffery, U.S. Ambassador to Egypt.
5. Ahmad Touqan, Jordanian Observer at the Fifth Session of U.N. General Assembly and at the Security Council. See Vol. 5, No. 519; see also No. 12 below. Touqan served alternately in the first part of 1951 as Jordan's Minister of Education and Minister of Foreign Affairs. As of August 1951 he served as a senior representative on the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission and as a Jordanian representative at the Paris Conciliation Conference.
6. Reuven Shiloah, Adviser on Special Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Liaison Officer with I.D.F. General Staff.

6. M. Comay to E. Elath (Telegram). 5 January 1951

Notes

1. Michael Comay, Director of the British Commonwealth Division and of the International Organizations Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. Eliahu Elath, Israel Minister in London.
3. David Horowitz, Economic Adviser to the Government and Director-General, Ministry of Finance.
4. A conference of heads of British Commonwealth countries took place in London concurrently (January 4–12).
5. Emanuel Shinwell, British Minister of Defence.
6. Hugh T. N. Gaitskell, British Chancellor of the Exchequer.
7. Herbert Morrison, British Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House of Commons. Foreign Secretary from March 1951 until October 1951.
8. Robert Gordon Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia.

7. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 8 January 1951

Notes

1. Charles Brannan, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.
2. Ralph S. Trigg, President of the Commodity Credit Corporation and Deputy Administrator for Program and Requirements. In his first talk with Israeli representatives regarding the stockpiling program, Trigg said the U.S. had no surplus wheat, and described potential problems in implementing the programme. (See Eban's cable to Eytan, W572, 6 January 195[1], 93.03/2207/12.)
3. Several days later, Eban explained Trigg's reserved posture as originating in the absence of action by the Israeli embassy to prepare the Department of Agriculture staff. He announced that the embassy was trying to rectify the situation through meetings with "Brannan's boys". (See Eban's cable to United States Department, W592, 11 January 1951, 93.03/2207/12.)
4. On 11 January Eban reported on a very encouraging meeting with the Secretary of the Interior, Oscar Chapman, dealing with the matter of fuel stockpiling. Chapman promised his assistance in all stockpiling affairs. (See Eban's telegram to Sharett, NP188, 11 January 1951, 93.03/2203/3.) See also No. 28.

8. Note from D. Ben-Gurion to King Abdallah (Amman). Delivered on 9 January 1951

Orig. translation from Arabic[1]: IMDEA 230.72/2188

Ben-Gurion expresses delight at Abdallah's letter to President Weizmann,[2] especially regarding its contents on Israel's peace efforts. He shares the King's assessment of the international situation, which calls for a joint effort to achieve a settlement and attain stability in the region. Ben-Gurion informs him that he has instructed Shiloah to approach the King about renewing the joint efforts to seek a solution satisfactory to both sides.

Notes

1. An Arabic version is on file; neither has a date. Date of delivery is known from Ron's letter to Argov dated 29 January 1951, IMDEA, 230.27/2188.
2. Refers to Abdallah's letter to President Weizmann on 31 December 1950, which reached Ben-Gurion on 3 January 1951. In it Abdallah wrote, "The inescapable conclusion is that we must end the *status quo,* so perversely opposed to the spirit of peace that reigns on both sides. . . . I recall appreciatively those efforts for peace begun at the end of last summer by Mr. Elias Sasson, which he continued together with Mr. Shiloah and Brigadier General Dayan throughout the winter, efforts which have been interrupted until now. The world situation requires that we find speedily avenues to peace in this region. . . ."

"The Armistice Agreement lays the groundwork for a final settlement. Yet, the government here [Jordan] cannot begin discussing principles of a sincere solution before it proves to the public that such a settlement is firmly rooted in goodwill that cannot be undermined by either side. Through my resolute decision to restore the *status quo ante* along the Arava watercourse and at Naharayim, I hope to avoid the divisiveness and resentment that are liable to postpone ungainfully achievement of our desired goal. I pray Your Highness will agree with me and, in view of the aforesaid, will see to implementing Article 8 of the Armistice Agreement in a manner that will remove the complaints and bitterness from the peoples' hearts, stimulating both sides to move on to the final settlement" (from the original Hebrew translation of the Arabic letter, both in the IMDEA, 230.72/2188). Ben-Gurion replied to this letter on account of President Weizmann's illness. See No. 13 and n. 2 *ibid.*, and No. 37.

9. A. Eban to E. Elath (Telegram). 9 January 1951

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5.

10. Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv. 9 January 1951

Notes

1. Identical notes were delivered the same day to the British and French representatives in Tel Aviv.
2. See Vol. 5, No. 423, and n. 1 *ibid.*

11. A. Biran[1] (Jerusalem) to W. Eytan. 9 January 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2441/4

Biran sums up his reflections and conclusions after his talks with Arab representatives in Jerusalem. He does not believe that the prospects of a settlement with Jordan have increased during the last year and a half. There has been no change in the basic Arab position which claims that Israel is the party that must make concessions to achieve a settlement. Thus, Nashashibi[2] told him that the Palestine problem would be resolved not by direct negotiations between the two states, but rather by the imposition of authority from without. According to Nashashibi, Israel-Jordan peace is contingent upon Israel's acceptance of the partition plan. Nashashibi repeatedly contended in his talks with Biran that the Arabs are convinced that only the U.N. resolution to cease the fighting in Palestine prevented their victory over Israel,

and that most of the Arab public insists on waiting for the right moment to embark on a second round of fighting that will eliminate Israel once and for all. Only the moderates among the Arabs are willing to accept the partition plan, and even the best of them cannot conceive of sitting down at one table as equals with Israel. They believe Israel must be the first to offer concessions. Nashashibi praised Israel's palliative measures to allow crossing of the armistice lines on the Christian festivals, but when Biran reminded him that Israel had proposed a year and a half ago to facilitate movement between the two sectors of Jerusalem, Nashashibi replied that letting Arabs enter Israel was all well and good, but the idea of letting a Jew enter Jordan was inconceivable.

Abd al-Ghani al-Karmi told Biran that in exchange for arrangements at Naharayim and the Eilat road, access would be given to Mount Scopus. This is because Samir al-Rifa'i[5] thinks it is possible to use the main road in Sheikh Jarrah, while the King is inclined to open a new road north of the Police School. These utterances notwithstanding, Biran does not foresee an easy solution. In the very same breath, after all, al-Karmi said that Israel was not abiding by the Armistice Agreement, especially with respect to Paragraph 6, which stipulates that Israel must allow Arabs whose fields are on the Israeli side to work their lands. Biran suggests that first an attempt be made to understand the Arab interpretation of the Rhodes agreement and that Israel plan its course of action in future accordingly, rather than being irretrievably committed to the Israeli interpretation of the agreement.

When the Special Committee of the Armistice Commission reconvened, Hamid al-Farhan[6] made a lengthy presentation, the substance of which was that any Israel-Jordan settlement of Paragraph 8 in the Armistice Agreement must first of all meet the Jordanians' basic demands regarding all the other stipulations in the Agreement.

Notes

1. Avraham Biran, Jerusalem District Commissioner, Ministry of Interior; representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem and Israel Representative on the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission's Special Committee.
2. 'Azmi al-Nashashibi, senior Jordanian member of the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission.
3. See Vol. 5, Nos. 379, 486, n. 1, and No. 489 and nn. 4 and 5 *ibid.*
4. Abd al-Ghani al-Karmi, Private Secretary of King Abdallah of Jordan.
5. Samir al-Rifa'i, Prime Minister of Jordan.
6. Hamid Farhan, Jordanian Representative on the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission's Special Committee. For Special Committee meetings see Vol. 5, Editorial Note p. 627, and Nos. 482 and 488 *ibid.*
7. The appendices are omitted.

12. A. Eban (Washington) to W. Eytan, R. Shiloah, and S. Divon.[1] 10 January 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2408/13

Eban reports on the conclusions he drew from his talks with Touqan during the U.N. General Assembly.[2] (1) The atmosphere of these talks was at variance with the assumption commonly held in the foreign ministries of the U.S. and England to the effect that only Abdallah wished to arrive at a settlement with the State of Israel, whereas all other political circles violently opposed the very idea of an Israeli-Jordanian settlement. Touqan, a Palestinian Arab, is weighing the specious benefits of pan-Arab solidarity and adherence to the Arab League *vis-à-vis* the damage caused by Jordan's loss of an outlet to the sea and the possibility of American aid for joint Israel-Jordan development projects. (2) In light of these talks, Eban is of the opinion that, were Israel able to find a way to compensate Jordanian cabinet ministers and parliamentarians for their abandoned estates in Israel, their attitude to Israel would be completely different. Israel, he believes, has an erroneous conception of the state of affairs. Arab statesmen view matters from a personal perspective. They tend to give precedence to individual welfare over that of the community, unlike Israel, which views political matters in terms of the commonweal. Eban recommends sparing no effort to achieve peace with Jordan. (3) Jerusalem—in Eban's opinion, conditions must be created in Jerusalem that would discourage U.N. members from trying to give tangible expression to the idea of internationalization, either territorial or functional. Eban proposed to Touqan that the two governments ruling Jerusalem jointly inaugurate arrangements for the holy places. He assumes that his suggestion has already affected the Jordanian decision to appoint a high commissioner on its behalf to oversee the holy places. Eban proposes that Israel also appoint a high commissioner for the holy places in its domain, invite the churches to appoint representatives to an advisory committee that would function alongside this commissioner, and that it attempt to coordinate and standardize its arrangements with those of Jordan. If, as a result of this activity, freedom of worship and access to the holy places are enhanced, ruined churches are repaired more rapidly, and religious buildings once again fulfill their intended functions, it will be easier for Israel to claim that this problem has been solved and that there is no further need for international supervision. After these steps, Eban proposes moving the remaining ministries to Jerusalem while at the same time negotiating with the countries represented in Israel. Israel can claim that the General Assembly has in fact already abandoned the idea of

internationalization. Transfer of the ministries would not be discordant with any action of the United Nations. Eban asks for a reaction to his proposal.

Notes

1. Shmuel Divon, Acting Director of the Middle East Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. See Vol. 5, No. 519.
3. See Eytan to Eban, 26 January 1951, 93.08/338/4; Divon to Eban, 4 February 1951, 93.03/3043/10; see also No. 79.

13. D. Ben-Gurion: diary note [Tel Aviv]. 11 January 1951

IMDEA

Ben-Gurion records a report by Shiloah on his talk with Samir al-Rifa'i.[1] King Abdallah took part in only some of the talk, explaining that it was his intent to set up a meeting between Shiloah and Rifa'i because the latter is not in complete agreement with the King's thoughts. The King asked for a letter of reply from the President.[2] Shiloah told Samir that if it became clear that the Israeli-occupied area in Eilat was within Jordanian territory, Israel would withdraw;[3] with respect to Naharayim,[4] accord on Paragraph 8 of the Armistice Agreement should be reached first, with this matter taken up only afterwards. In reply, Samir explained his situation in Jordan to Shiloah. He said that the Arabs considered the Rhodes agreement an "accursed" document of surrender and concessions. The Palestinians had no right to an opinion at the time it was signed, but once they became Jordanian nationals they did have such a right, and the agreement is detrimental to their interests. Samir himself had not been a party to the agreement, and no one in his present government had been in office then. He can either honour the agreement or declare war against it. At present, even the opposition was not inclined to come out against the agreement; he was duty-bound to uphold the agreement and thus lead to a state of peace, if not to real peace.

Shiloah suggested that a beginning be made by implementing Paragraph 8 of the Agreement, but Rifa'i argued that there were other stipulations that had not yet been fulfilled, including Paragraph 6, dealing with the fate of the population and land in the area annexed to Israel.

Shiloah rejected Rifa'i's claim and noted that Israel had honoured parts of Paragraph 6, such as recruiting local policemen, whereas Paragraph 8 had not been implemented at all. Samir admitted as much, and suggested that the question of whether the entire agreement had been implemented or not be subject to immediate inquiry. It was agreed that Rifa'i would present Israel with his claims about the unimplemented provisions and his proposals as to implementation of Paragraph 8.

Notes

1. The meeting took place on the night between 10 and 11 January 1951. Shiloah reported to the British Minister saying that he now had a better idea of the difficulties faced by King Abdallah and Premier Rifa'i and that he was much encouraged by the conversation. (See Helm to Furlonge, 12 January 1951, 15 January 1951; Kirkbride to the Foreign Office, 15 January 1951, PRO, FO371/91634; Helm to Furlonge, 17 January 1951, PRO, FO371/91370.)
2. Reply to Abdallah's letter. See No. 7 and n. 2 *ibid.*
3. See Vol. 5, No. 486, n. 1 and No. 489 and nn. 4 and 5 *ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, No. 379.
5. Thus in original.

14. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 11 January 1951

Notes

1. See No. 2, n. 1.
2. Ernest Bevin, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5, and No. 9.
4. See No. 6, n. 4.
5. Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State.
6. Sir William Strang, British Permanent Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
7. See No. 18.
8. For more information on the telegram see Elath's report to Comay, 17 January 1951, 93.04/36/3.

15. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 11 January 1951

Notes

1. The telegram was meant for Elath, too, and was sent to him via the Foreign Ministry in Tel Aviv. (See Efrat to Elath, 11 January 1951, 130.09/2308/20.)
2. See No. 14.
3. Dean Rusk, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs.
4. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5, and Nos. 2 and 9.

5. Moshe A. Tov, Israel Alternate Permanent Representative at the U.N.
6. Roberto Urdaneta Arbeláez, Colombian Minister of War and Chairman of the Delegation to the Fifth Session of the U.N. General Assembly. Minister of Interior from July 1951.
7. Warren R. Austin, U.S. Permanent Representative at the U.N.

Editorial Note

Israel Resolution to Terminate Hostilities in Korea

On 12 January Israel presented the U.N. General Assembly Political Committee with a draft resolution for ending the Korean Conflict. (See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5, and Nos. 2, 9, 14, and 15.) For text of the draft resolution see Main Volume, Editorial Note, pp. 27–28.

16. M. Keren to M. Sharett (Telegram). 13 January 1951

Notes

1. Sharett informed Eban of his support for D. Horowitz's appraisal that the next Great Power summit would be Israel's last chance to submit its claim for half a billion dollars in German reparations. Sharett decided to present his proposal to the Cabinet, and sought the views of Israel's representatives in Washington and New York. He noted the intrinsic advantage of approaching the Great Powers as opposed to Germany directly (19 January 1951, 93.01/2207/13).
2. Reference is to Robinson's rough draft of 19 December 1951 concerning Israel's claim to German reparations (93.08/344/16).
3. Eytan cabled the contents of the Cabinet's decision of 3 January 1951 (4 January 1951, 130.09/2377/1). See Editorial Note, p. 6.
4. 9 January 1951, 93.01/2207/12.

17. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 15 January 1951

Notes

1. Ben-Gurion responded to Kollek's angry cable (W579, 8.1.51, 93.01/2207/12) about differing positions between Tel Aviv and Israel's delegation in Washington with respect to military ties with the U.S. In reply to Kollek's request that the American Military Attaché be allowed full visitation rights in Israel's arms industry, Ben-Gurion wrote that he was "sorry such far-reaching offers were made in America" without his being informed either before or afterward. He asked Kollek to wait for Sharett's return (Ben-Gurion's telegram to the Israel Embassy in Washington, IWA98, 11 January 1951). See also No. 22.
2. See No. 35.

18. Meeting: E. Elath–Sir William Strang. 16 January 1951

Notes

1. See No. 14.
2. Sir Alexander Knox Helm, British Minister to Israel until August 1951.
3. Brian Hubert Robertson, Commander-in-Chief, British Middle East Land Forces.
4. See No. 67, Editorial Note, pp. 58–59, and Nos. 68, 69, 71 and 72.
5. See Editorial Note, p. 3.
6. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5.
7. Elath arrived in Israel for a visit on 26 January carrying this document. Together with Sharett, Eytan, Comay and Shiloah, he consulted with Ben-Gurion the next day. Ben-Gurion reprimanded Elath, telling him that he "had made a serious error by coming to Israel with this proposal". . . . Had he wished to avoid the responsibility of giving an immediate answer, argued Ben-Gurion, he could have sent a message by courier. Ben-Gurion added that "this proposal is not a matter for discussion. Despite its closing phrase, it expresses their will to return to Israel. Why should we give them a foothold? Their Near East policy has not changed despite changes in public opinion and in the attitudes of several Cabinet members. It is not Cripps, Morrison and Bevan who run foreign policy, but Bevin alone. And it is a policy of enmity: support of an Arab League whose only activity is war against Israel, shipment to Egypt of arms that would never be meant for use against Russia but against Israel. Bevin's foreign policy is none other than His Majesty's, for the British Foreign Office represents not itself but the entire country". . . . "Allowing them military bases makes us look like an enemy of Russia's, is liable to harm immigration, and delivers us to the Arabs. . . . It is an insulting proposal. What are they offering? Should they not first have asked themselves why Israel would do it? . . . The [Arab] Legion is really a British army and Abdallah a British pensioner. To this day they do not wish for peace between us and the Arabs, and Crossman said in so many words (though not to me) that peace between Israel and Egypt is not in Britain's interest" (Ben-Gurion's diary, 27 January 1951, IMDEA).
8. In file 130.13/2582/3.

Editorial Note

Transmission of Reparations Note to the Four Powers

Similar notes were delivered simultaneously in London, Paris, and the Soviet diplomatic mission in Tel Aviv (130.02/2417/1). In an explanatory letter to Israel's representatives, Eytan clarified that the notes were being delivered in accordance with the Cabinet's resolution on Germany (see Editorial Note, p. 6). He instructed Israel's representatives to impart orally that "Israel regards this matter as urgent, especially in view of the changes about to occur in the status of the Occupation Authorities and the German Federal Republic. Furthermore,

Israel is eager to know what the U.S. (or Britain and France) advise in this matter, especially as regards other formal and technical steps that must be taken." Eytan added that should Israel's representatives be told that the most efficient way to achieve these goals was by sending a delegation to Bonn, to the Occupation Authorities, or to the German government itself, they should reply that the idea is interesting, that such a possibility has been raised before, and that it must be presented to the Cabinet. (Eytan to Eban, 7 January 1951, 93.08/344/16.)

When the note was delivered in Washington, the Director of the Bureau of German Affairs in the State Department hinted that "apparently direct contact with Germany is the only approach that may help." Lord Henderson, receiving the letter from Elath, said that "a solution will require an appropriate legal procedure on the part of the Occupation Authorities in future treaties with Germany." The General Secretary of the French Foreign Ministry, in turn, accused the Americans, in the presence of Fischer, of "now ignoring the results and crimes of Hitler's regime". (See Eytan's cable to Israel's foreign delegations, 21 January 1951, 130.09/2377/1; Avner to Israel's foreign delegations, 23 January 1951, 130.10/2515/1.)

19. Note from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 16 January 1951

Note

1. See No. 84.

20. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 16 January 1951

Notes

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, Indian Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs.
2. Ibn Saud, King of Saudi Arabia.
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5.

21. S. Eliashiv[1] (Prague) to M. Sharett. 16 January 1951

Coded Tels. P925, P927; Inc.: 130.09/2342/16

Eliashiv reports on a meeting with the Chinese representative in Prague. They discussed the Korean conflict. Eliashiv stressed that the world expected China to make a positive move. The Chinese diplomat

replied that Formosa belongs to China, and only after the Americans and their satellites vacated Korea will negotiations be possible. He said that the conflict pertains to Korea and not to China, and that the Americans should not be trusted since they will resume their machinations at the first opportune moment.

Eliashiv asserted that there is still a great part of the world outside the two blocs that is wholeheartedly interested in peace. The Chinese envoy emphasized his country's friendliness towards Israel, and added that the Chinese were aware of Israel's position towards China and had noted the efforts of Israel and India in the United Nations to achieve peace. China had also followed Israel's War of Independence sympathetically. Eliashiv assumes that the rigidity of the Chinese diplomat's replies was a carry-over from the past, and that he had not yet been instructed how to express himself after the U.N. resolution.[3]

Notes

1. Shmuel Eliashiv, Israel Minister to Czechoslovakia and Hungary until April 1951. From June, Minister to U.S.S.R.
2. The party of Chiang Kai-Shek, President of the National Republic of China (Formosa).
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5.

22. D. Ben-Gurion (Jerusalem) to T. Kollek[1] (Washington). 17 January 1951

Copy: IMDEA 532.73/169

Ben-Gurion replies to Kollek's letter[2] but starts out by expressing a concern that has bothered him ever since he learned of Sharett's memorandum to Marshall, especially its Paragraph E.[5] He restates his position on strengthening relations with the United States, claiming that it is farther-reaching than Sharett's. He does not espouse the use of the phrase "non-alignment" as Sharett does, because it intrinsically implies policymaking by way of negation. Ben-Gurion believes that Israel cannot remain neutral in the ideological dispute between East and West. The question of democracy and liberty is vital for Israel, which must be prepared to fight for these values if they are ever threatened. He also spoke in this vein in his latest speech in the Knesset.[6]

Notwithstanding his positive attitude towards the United States, Ben-Gurion found it hard to understand why Paragraph E was included in the memorandum. In his view, there is no proof at the

current stage that the United States would be ready to defend the Middle East, and that it is interested in a reciprocal attachment with Israel on security matters. Ben-Gurion is upset about the unilateral proposal that was included in the memorandum, and would like to find out whether the Americans had requested it. He also reprimands Kollek and Eban for not having consulted with him as Prime Minister and Defence Minister before having included a provision with security implications in the memorandum. He writes that "a terrible mistake has been made", from which he does not know how to recover.[7] Ben-Gurion is highly appreciative of Kollek's and Eban's efforts, but clarifies that he must address these comments to them in view of the gravity of the matter.[8]

Subsequently Ben-Gurion addresses himself to several issues raised by Kollek in his letter. He notes that he favours continued action towards involving the United States in the defence of the Middle East. He does not believe that an Israeli initiative for talks with Bevin will lead to desirable results, but is ready to hear him out if he should approach Israel. Ben-Gurion is aware of the reports of changes in British public opinion, but, he says, the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs "will be able to hold talks not with public opinion but rather with the Foreign Secretary; the time for this is not yet ripe, and without an initiative by the other side an [Israeli] approach would be of no benefit".[10]

Notes

1. Theodore (Teddy) Kollek, Israel Minister in Washington.
2. Kollek wrote to Ben-Gurion of Bonds activities in the United States, ways of obtaining American financial aid for Israel, and Great Britain's role in Middle East defence. Basing himself on talks in Washington with the official in charge of the State Department's Middle East Division, Kollek recommended that Sharett go to London in order to examine at close range the possibility of Israeli-British cooperation in regional defence (93.08/342/19).
3. Pinhas Lavon (Lubianiker), Israel Minister of Agriculture, and Pinhas Sapir, the Director-General of the Ministry of Defence. Both left on an urgent mission to the United States in January 1951, to help obtain financing for the purchase of emergency stores.
4. Henry Montor, Vice-Chairman of the American Financial and Development Corporation for Israel (Israel Bonds).
5. See Vol. 5, No. 517 (Appendix). Paragraph 9(e) reads: "A discreet expert survey . . . of Israel's military and industrial potential . . . would be an invaluable and prudent prelude to any plan for the defence of the area".
6. See Editorial Note, page 3.
7. In a telegram dated the same day (IWA 111, 17 January 1951, 130.09/2308/15) Ben-Gurion asked Eban if it was at all possible to rescind the paragraph. Eban replied that it was definitely possible: "If they don't mention our proposal it will

automatically be annulled. And if they do mention it, we'll say that since the Minister of Defence asked us to provide him with all details and materials on all the paragraphs in our memorandum, there's no need for a special visit, and it's best to forget all about it" (Eban's cable to Ben-Gurion, WIA613, 19 January 1951, 93.01/2207/12).

8. For Kollek's reply see No. 26.
9. Meyer Weisgal, Vice-President, American Financial and Development Corporation for Israel (Israel Bonds).
10. Cf. No. 18 and n. 7 *ibid.*

23. S. Rosenne to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations (Telegram). 18 January 1951

Notes

1. The resolution was adopted with the votes of the Israel and the U.N. representatives in the Mixed Armistice Commission. See Vol. 4, Nos. 205 and 257.
2. For background to the acceptance of the resolution, see Vol. 4, No. 33, and nn. 1–2 *ibid.*
3. In a Security Council meeting on 5 August 1947, Egyptian Prime Minister Nokrashi said that the Suez Canal agreement was based on the principle that the Canal was an international artery open to all nations in both peacetime and wartime, and that the responsibility for defending the vital waterway was Egypt's.
4. Abraham Feller, General Counsel and Director of Legal Department, U.N. Secretariat.
5. The protocol is in File No. 93.03/3006/1.

24. A. Eban to C. F. Brannan. 19 January 1951

Note

1. See No. 7.

Editorial Note

Continuation of the U.N. Debate on Korea

On 17 January 1951, the government of the People's Republic of China replied to the Political Committee resolution of 13 January (see Editorial Notes, pp. 4–5, 15). China rejected the principle of a cease-fire before negotiations, on which the resolution was based, and presented its own plan to resolve the conflict. China demanded negotiations based on agreement to withdraw all foreign forces from Korea,

to allow the Korean people to run their own internal affairs, to evacuate Formosa, and to attain U.N. recognition of China. China's reply, and draft resolutions presented by the United States and twelve Arab and Asian countries, were discussed by the Political Committee between 18 and 30 January 1951.

In the meeting of 18 January, the U.S. representative proposed that China be censured for its aggression, demanded the evacuation of its forces, and asked the collective measures committee to consider imposing sanctions on China. America's allies did not react positively to this proposal. Western countries participating in the debate criticized China but suggested that the proposal to censure China and, in particular, the paragraph on sanctions be very carefully considered. On 20 January, after the U.S. failed to secure support for a censure motion, they presented their own draft resolution calling for the censure of China, instructing it to evacuate its forces, and asking the collective measures committee to convene. On 25 January, twelve Asian countries headed by India, presented a draft resolution under which a seven-country committee would be convened to solve the Korean problem after a cease-fire or, at the very least, a respite was assured.

The U.S. proposal placed several American allies in a dilemma. The British representative took exception to certain of its components, particularly the paragraph on sanctions. The British vacillated until the last moment on how to vote. The Israeli representative participated in the discussion of 26 January, supporting the U.S. proposal but aligning himself with the British representative's stance: censure without punitive measures. Eban proposed that a committee be appointed to attempt to achieve a cease-fire and search for a solution to the entire complex of problems in the Far East.

The Political Committee voted on the various draft resolutions on 30 January. That of the twelve Asian countries was rejected. An amendment proposed by Lebanon to the American motion, moderating its paragraph on sanctions, was approved by a large majority and paved the way for approval of the proposal. Each paragraph was put to a separate vote. Eventually the proposal was adopted with 44 in favour, seven against (the Soviet bloc and Burma), and eight abstaining (the Arab bloc, Sweden and Yugoslavia). Israel abstained on the paragraph on sanctions. On 1 February, the General Assembly approved the proposal with the same majority. At Israel's request, a separate vote was held for the paragraph on sanctions, which was approved by a majority of 43 to 7, with eight abstaining, including Israel. (See *GAOR, 5th Sess., First Committee,* 426th–438th Meetings, 18, 27, 29, 30 January 1951, pp. 501–603; *GAOR, 5th Sess.,* 327th Plenary Meeting, 1 February 1951, pp. 689–96; Supplement No. 20A, A/1775/add.1.)

25. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 20 January 1951

Notes

1. Sharett was responding to Lourie's report about the American intention to have the Political Committee censure China. Sharett noted that Israel had spoken out against aggression in the past, but expressed grave concern about U.S. policy, which, he said, was liable to cause a serious rift with China and aggravate international tension. (Sharett's cable to Lourie, 19 January 1951, 130.09/2338/14.)
2. See Editorial Note above.

26. T. Kollek (Washington) to D. Ben-Gurion. 21 January 1951

Orig.: IMDEA 532.73/169

Replying to Ben-Gurion's cable,[2] Kollek writes that Ben-Gurion's conclusion that Israel is moving towards the West with undue speed is rooted in the assumption that the United States will not defend the Middle East. After exploring the matter with M. Shalit, Kollek reports his conclusions: (a) The United States has stopped planning on the basis of individual states in favour of regional planning. (b) The Middle East is third priority in allocation of weapons and funds for defence, after Europe and the Far East. (c) The three Western powers are interested in the defence of the Middle East. (d) Under the present circumstances, the West cannot protect the area from Soviet attack because of manpower and weapons shortages. (e) First indications of planning for the area's defence are perceptible, and at this stage Israel is capable of influencing and integrating into it. (f) The British will admittedly continue to be the major force in defending the region, but the Americans will be active participants, serving at the very least as coordinators between the various forces and interests that will operate in the region. (g) The Americans do not count on the Arabs as front-line soldiers, but do rely on the armies of Turkey and Israel. The use of these armies presents several problems: (1) with Israel-Arab relations being what they are, there is no possibility of establishing a regional bloc comprising all forces in the area; (2) Turkey is disinclined to tie its fate to that of the Middle East, and is eyeing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; (3) Turkey and Israel by themselves lack the manpower necessary for the region's defence; (4) this problem could be resolved if India joined the West, and the matter was discussed in a meeting of Commonwealth representatives in London.[4] (h) An immediate war would find the Middle East undefended;

the passage of time will mitigate in favour of the area's defence. American-British collaboration in defence of the region is essential and inevitable, and there is reason to take action in the United States at such a time as would ensure Israel's integration into the general plan. Israel's request for weapons or any other kind of help may be honoured by Great Britain or some other Western country, but no such action would be undertaken without coordination with the Americans; the efforts invested in the U.S., therefore, were not in vain. Considerations connected with the success of selling bonds in America and attaining U.S. economic and military aid lead to the conclusion that rather rapid progress should be made towards a closer relationship between Israel and the United States.

In Kollek's view, the earlier Israel becomes involved and presents its proposals for cooperation, the more likely it is that Israel will be taken into the Americans' plans and be able to influence them. Kollek believes that rapid and full collaboration should be achieved in various fields, such as policy in the U.N. and the military concerns that Sharett mentioned in his letter to Marshall.[5] Kollek believes it necessary to shift to joint staff work in both the military and the political fields, and Marshall's reply to Sharett's letter[6] leads to exactly that stage. Kollek clarified that yielding on Paragraph E of Sharett's memorandum would present no difficulty if Israel remains active in all the other areas and lets this point fall into oblivion, but he does not believe it will be possible to progress without full coordination and cooperation between Israel's envoys in the United States and her decision-makers at home. Kollek stresses that the talks with U.S. Embassy officials in Tel Aviv have to be conducted in the spirit of statements made by Israel's representatives in Washington; moreover, sound relations should be maintained with the American military attachés. In his opinion, the Americans should be allowed to visit the Israeli military industries if Israel wants military aid from the United States. He describes the situation in Israel as "xenophobia". Kollek tried to fathom Ben-Gurion's motives, and one of his conclusions was that election considerations may be the source of his apprehensions. In this context, he wrote that the major issue facing the Yishuv was how to fulfill the historic mission of ingathering the exiles, and it would hold the government in greater esteem if it succeeded in accomplishing this by means of American aid. In his opinion, the Israeli information effort had not made adequate domestic propaganda use of the recently approved American agricultural loan,[7] the previous year's American loan, and the provision of surplus food commodities for Israel from American stocks.

Notes

1. See No. 22, n. 2.
2. See No. 17, n. 1.
3. Four words were omitted here.
4. See No. 6, n. 4.
5. See Vol. 5, No. 517.
6. *Ibid.*, n. 2.
7. See No. 5, n. 1.
8. Chaim (Vivian) Herzog: Military, Naval and Air Attaché at the Israel Embassy in Washington.
9. See No. 1.

27. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions in London, Washington and Paris (Telegram). 22 January 1951

Notes

1. See No. 23.
2. See Vol. 3, Appendix F.
3. William E. Riley, Chief of Staff of the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine and Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commissions.
4. Ralph J. Bunche, Director of Division of Trusteeship, U.N. Secretariat.

28. A. Eban to O. Chapman. 22 January 1951

Notes

1. Oscar L. Chapman, United States Secretary of the Interior.
2. See No. 7, n. 4.
3. See Vol. 5, Nos. 514, 509–510.

29. E. Livneh[1] (Munich) to the West European Division. 22 January 1951

Orig.: 130.10/2539/1

Livneh discusses the German attitude towards the reparations issue. In his opinion, the German circles that "count" treat the question seriously. Their motives are commercial, political, etc. There is also a certain mystic fear, shared even by senior government officials, that if the Germans do not effect a reconciliation with the Jewish people, the new Germany will not be able to function successfully. Livneh

encloses an article[2] that substantiates his view.

In a talk between Blankenhorn (Foreign Affairs Coordinator in Bonn) and an American Jew, the former enumerated the major reasons why Germany had to effect a reconciliation with the Jewish people and, especially, with the State of Israel: (a) Germany would not succeed in rejoining the family of nations if it did not atone for its wrongs against the Jews. (b) The Jewish boycott was acutely felt in Germany, and might assume greater proportions if Germany did not hasten to compensate the Jewish people. (c) The State of Israel is a decisive factor in the issue of effecting this reconciliation. (d) Establishing ties with the Arab world as a way of avoiding resolution of the relationship with Israel was indicative of a short-sighted policy, because Israel would eventually resolve its relations with the Arabs and become an influential factor in the Middle East. If Germany failed to make amends with Israel, it would not be able to achieve a foothold in the Middle East.

Livneh suggests that Israel exploit this dominant trend in German thinking in order to promote the reparations issue.

Notes

1. Eliahu K. Livneh, Israel Consul and Immigration Officer in Munich.
2. Appendix omitted here.
3. Appendix omitted here.

30. I. Barzilai[1] (Prague) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 24 January 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2342/16

After his talk with the President and Prime Minister of Poland,[2] in which he stressed the question of continued *aliya*,[3] Barzilai was visited by the Director of the Prime Minister's Bureau, who sought out his proposals on this matter.

Barzilai presented three proposals: (1) emigration permits for the 10,000–13,000 people who had been turned down; (2) emigration permits for all former members of Zionist parties; (3) a favourable arrangement for special types of emigrants such as separated families, people with relatives in Israel, employees of the Israel legation, Zionist activists, etc. The Bureau Director stressed that the fact that the Prime Minister had sent him to Barzilai indicated the authorities' favourable attitude. Although the deadline for issuing passports had already

passed, they were still being issued and extended, and appeals against refusals were being received. Barzilai added that a ministerial committee would soon be appointed to examine the emigration applications and appeals.

Notes

1. Israel Barzilai, Israel Minister to Poland until mid-January 1951. The telegram below was sent through the Israel Legation in Prague.
2. Shortly before concluding his duties in Warsaw, Barzilai called on senior government officials in Poland for farewell meetings. (Barzilai's cable to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, BI281, 16 January 1951, 130.09/2306/4.)
3. At that time, the Polish authorities suddenly and unexpectedly announced that from 1 January 1951 they would no longer issue passports. The measure threw Polish Jewry into panic and despair, and hundreds of people appealed to the Israel Legation. A group of 800 had left Poland on 10 January 1951, and another group was expected to leave at the end of the month. Some of the emigrants had received passports before the gates had been closed; others had had their passports extended. B. Niv, reporting on these developments, expressed concern that "this will be the last of the convoys heading for Israel unless a miracle happens and the government changes its position towards those they have turned down". (See Niv to East European Division, 16 January 1951, 130.11/2502/11.)
4. See Barzilai to Levavi, 21 January 1951, 130.02/2457/18.

31. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legations in Eastern Europe. 24 January 1951

Coded Tel. P32; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Eytan instructs Israel's envoys to cultivate social and personal relations with the Chinese envoys in Eastern European capitals. The purpose is to probe the Chinese and study their ways of thinking and policymaking, which are foreign and unfamiliar to Israel. Eytan asks them to explore the following questions in particular: (a) The extent and the nature of relations between China and the Soviet Union. How absolute and permanent is the Sino-Russian alliance? Are the Russians the senior partner in the alliance? Do the Russians dictate, or do they consult with the Chinese? Do the Chinese accept the Russian dictates amicably, or do they try to modify the situation? (b) Do the Chinese contemplate shutting themselves off from the West and America? (c) Are they considering intervention in the Indo-China War? (d) Are they inclined to intervene in Malaya and the civil war in Burma? (e) What do they think about countries that try to walk a middle line, such as India? (f) What is their reaction to Israel's compromise initia-

tive in the U.N.?[1] (g) What do they think about the attempt to establish an Asian bloc? (h) Do they have an opinion on Israel-Arab affairs? Eytan instructs the envoys to pursue these inquiries cautiously and avoid any impression of an organized operation.

Note

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5.

32. E. Sasson (Ankara) to M. Sasson.[1] 24 January 1951

Orig.: 130.15/2570/7

Sasson makes several comments on Moshe Sasson's draft, "On Israel-Jordan Relations":[2]

(a) He disagrees with his son's assumption that under present conditions Jordan is still the only Arab state with which a peace settlement can be reached. In his view, Jordan admittedly displays an inclination to make peace with Israel; on the other hand, Jordan is also the Arab state with the greatest claims against Israel — claims to which Israel cannot agree and which are liable to result in resumption of the war, if they will not be resolved quickly. Furthermore, Israel's relations with Jordan depend on Abdallah, who, for all his courage and good will, cannot direct and conduct the course of affairs independently, freely, and properly. Sasson presents several questions in this context: What would happen if Abdallah were not to live long enough to sign a peace agreement? What would happen if Great Britain ordered him to break off the talks? And what would happen if he could not find a prime minister who would remain completely loyal to him? Until these questions are answered satisfactorily, it should not be assumed that an agreement can be reached with Jordan earlier than with any other Arab country.

(b) Sasson does not agree that it was Egypt which invented the refugee problem and turned it into a bargaining card; he blames Israeli policy for having pushed Egypt into adopting such a policy. He believes Israel erred when it agreed to accept the Arab states as the refugees' representatives and refused to negotiate a resolution of their problems directly with the refugees themselves. Just as Israel forcefully insisted on "discussing the refugee problem only within the framework of a comprehensive peace", so did the Egyptians insist on "not detaching the refugee problem from any negotiations between themselves and Great Britain about the evacuation of the Suez Canal,

and from any negotiations between themselves and the United States about joining this or that alliance in case of a world war." Sasson writes that until Israeli policy finds a way to prevent the Arab states from using the refugees as a weapon, Israel should not expect the Egyptians to adopt a more flexible stance or stop bargaining at Israel's expense.

(c) In Sasson's opinion, Israeli policy overemphasized the Arab boycott and economic embargo of Israel; in so doing, it merely hardened the Arabs' hearts. As long as Israel continues raising the issue of the embargo with the Arabs, no change should be expected, especially in Egypt.

(d) Sasson is of the opinion that Israel should not speak at excessive length about its desire for peace, because the Arabs interpret these proclamations as manifestations of Israeli weakness. He believes Israel has succeeded in strengthening and fortifying itself even without peace, and could continue to do so for many years to come.

(e) Sasson writes that he is not to be counted among those who believe that Israel would gain from the deepening of the rift between the Hashemite and the Egyptian-Saudi blocs. In his opinion, this falling-out improves the position of the Mufti and his supporters and makes them a factor in any discussion about the Israel-Arab conflict. This accounts for the failure of the agreement initialled with Abdallah,[3] and is the source of the Arab League's strength. If the Arab states maintained normal relations with each other, they would not oppose a settlement with Israel as fiercely as they do, and Israel would not have become the only item on the agenda of Arab League meetings during the past four years.

Sasson concluded his letter by criticizing the way Arab affairs were being handled in Israel. Everyone was involved with them. The army, the police, the Political Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and others were all meddling with them, without any coordination or cooperation. "And as long as we do not make our own thorough inquiries as to the ins and outs of the Arab world, any operation, even the most serious, and any effort, even the most strenuous, will have been doomed to failure from the outset."

Notes

1. Moshe Sasson, an official in the Middle East Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. Reference is to an undated draft entitled "On Israel-Arab Relations". A version of the draft was attached as an appendix to a comprehensive document dated 18 January 1951, by the Middle East Division, entitled "On Israel-Arab Relations (Analysis, Aims, Conclusions and Working Proposals)". Both documents are in File 130.15/2570/7.

In the first document, Sasson argues that Egypt holds the key to Israel-Arab relations but is far from reconciliation with Israel; Jordan is the only country with any peaceful inclinations. Sasson attempts to derive lessons from the negotiations with Jordan since the end of the war, and concludes that peace with Jordan is possible if Israel agrees to meet some of Jordan's requests. He says the government has to decide "whether peace with Jordan is vital, what price Israel is prepared to pay for it without impairing its own domestic stability, and whether the price proposed will meet Jordan's minimal demands". He believes a position that rejects concessions leads to the conclusion "that peace should not be sought in the near future, and that policy must rest on the assumption that peace cannot be attained in the near future". In such a case, Sasson suggests several principles for a policy of slow progress towards peace: Israel should (a) help solve the refugee problem by favouring the refugees' resettlement and allocating resources for this purpose; (b) solve outstanding problems between itself and Jordan (Article 8 of the Armistice Agreement, no-man's-land, the Triangle, compensation to refugees, Jerusalem) slowly and gradually so as to satisfy both sides; (c) explore the possibility of promoting trade with Jordan; (d) deliberately cultivate ties with Jordanian opposition figures by building personal relations based on mutual interest; (e) encourage and pursue contacts with Abdallah; (f) organize propaganda in Jordan fostering the idea of peace with Israel; (g) clip the wings of persons unwilling to compromise with Israel.

3. See Vol. 5, Editorial Note, p. 139, and No. 105.

33. E. Herlitz to the United States Division (Telegram). 24 January 1951

Notes

1. Edward (Eddie) Jacobson, a friend of President Truman's.
2. Clement R. Attlee, Prime Minister of Great Britain. Attlee's speech in the Commons on 23 January implied that Britain would support the censure of China while opposing sanctions.

34. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 25 January 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5, and No. 38.
2. In the first telegram, Lourie reported on a talk with Jebb, who told him he was awaiting his government's instructions on how to vote on the American draft resolution. Jebb expressed support of Israel's position that renewed attempts to start negotiations should be attached to the censure. He expressed concern about "the United States' political hysteria towards China" and reported on American opposition to the Asian countries' draft resolution.

   In the second telegram, Eban reported on the trend of thought in the Committee and asked for instructions on how to vote if the resolution included the paragraph on sanctions. He suggested that Israel vote as Britain and Canada do. (See Lourie's tele-

gram to Sharett, 24 January 1951, and Eban's telegram to Sharett, 24 January 1951, 93.01/2203/3.)

35. A. Eban [Washington] to D. Ben-Gurion. 25 January 1951

Copy: 93.08/338/15

Eban sends Ben-Gurion a memorandum that he had previously sent to C. Herzog for the conference of Israeli military attachés in Tel Aviv. Eban proposes general topics of discussion on Israel-U.S. defence relations in view of the danger of a third world war.

(a) Eban believes the United States would not disregard the fate of the Middle East. He labels recent manifestations of American indifference as to the area's defence as "temporary" and "fleeting". Among the considerations that have restrained the United States in formulating plans for defending the region Eban mentions the United States' involvement in Far Eastern affairs, concern for the fortification of Europe, the complex relations among the countries of the Middle East, and expectation that Great Britain will assert its traditional initiative in the area. Eban is sure that the Middle East will be the topic of serious and purposeful military deliberations next year. Marshall's letter to Sharett[1] attests to growing interest in the Middle East and in Israel. Eban suggests that the government and the General Staff clarify their stance on the possibility that the United States and Great Britain will soon inform Israel of their intention to prepare the region's defence, and their hope that Israel will be integrated into the Middle East defence system on the basis of its obligations under the U.N. Charter.

(b) As for the division of functions among the Powers, Eban assumes that the United States would not accede to Great Britain's assuming full and exclusive reponsibility for the region's defence. Within the framework of joint defence programs, however, Great Britain would have the major responsibility for defence of the region. Israel will be able to influence the United States to assume greater responsibility, but not to push Great Britain out.

(c) The Sharett-Marshall talks marked the end of the abstract stage of exploring relations; henceforth Israel will have to develop tangible plans in cooperation with American military officials. If Israel is not prepared to let American officers examine its military production capacity and training methods, there will be no point in maintaining relations and continuing with abstract talk about friendship and strengthening of ties. Eban expresses the hope that abstract ideological considerations will not be treated with excessive importance in the

deliberations. He believes Israel should acknowledge that only through joint U.S.-Israeli defence can Israel avoid Soviet occupation in case of a world war.

(d) Eban stresses that a military *rapprochement* with the United States need not spell the end of Israel's independence in international affairs. Rather than doing Israel a charitable favour, the United States is acting in accordance with its national goals; hence Israel does not have to adopt an abject posture *vis-à-vis* the United States.

(e) The extent of Israel's willingness to strengthen its relations with U.S. military officials will affect the entire structure of the economic and political relationship between the two countries. Israel's requests for aid and support of its position in the conflict with the Arabs will be decisively affected by the ambiance of future relations between Israel and U.S. military representatives in Washington and Tel Aviv.

Note

1. See Vol. 5, No. 517, n. 2 (p. 722).

36. M. Keren[1] (Washington) to the United States Division. 25 January 1951

Orig.: 130.20/2463/8

Keren reports on a talk held on 22 January with Clark, the official in charge of Iraqi affairs in the State Department, with the participation of Waldo.[2] Keren expressed the government's concern about the attack on the synagogue in Baghdad,[3] and asked Clark to instruct the ambassador in Iraq to use his influence for the protection of the local Jewish minority. Keren added that Israel was making efforts to augment the quota of Iraqi emigrants to Israel; even should this be successful, it would take many months to bring them over.

In reply, Clark said that the American ambassador had standing orders to do his best to defend the minorities, including the Jews, and that he would act accordingly in this case as well. He noted that the United States government was concerned about the situation that might develop because of the presence there of tens of thousands of Jews deprived of Iraqi citizenship, who have to spend a protracted period of time awaiting their relocation to Israel. As for the bombing of the synagogue, Clark said that the State Department hoped it was an isolated case. The Iraqi authorities do not treat the Jewish minority badly, and the State Department does not know why the latest attack

occurred. Clark promised the American embassy's help if problems arose for Jews who had lost their Iraqi citizenship for having sought to emigrate to Israel, and who would not have time to leave Iraq should the departure law not be extended after 1 March.

Notes

1. Moshe Keren, Counsellor at the Israel Embassy in Washington.
2. John A. Waldo, Acting Officer in charge of Palestine-Israel-Jordan Affairs, Department of State.
3. On 14 January, an explosion in the synagogue in Baghdad left three dead, four seriously injured, and 23 with light injuries. In its aftermath Eytan instructed Israel's representatives in Washington and London to appeal to the State Department and Foreign Office respectively, and ask the British and American ambassadors in Iraq to intervene. (See Eytan's telegram to Israel missions abroad, MT5, 18 January 1951, 130.09/2377/1.)

37. E. Sasson (Ankara) to R. Shiloah. 25 January 1951

Copy: 130.15/2568/7

Sasson responds to the exchange of letters between King Abdallah and Ben-Gurion,[1] and to Shiloah's report of his talks with the King and Rifa'i.[2] While expressing appreciation of the King's courage—in taking the initiative in resuming contact with Israel and, for the first time, sending an official letter bearing his signature—Sasson does not share the optimism Shiloah displayed in his report. Rifa'i's comments on the Rhodes agreement were of special concern to Sasson. Rifa'i said that any subsequent agreement based on the Rhodes accord would be construed in Jordan as a further surrender and would be greeted with domestic upheaval; furthermore, in implementing the Rhodes agreement he would have to demand that all provisions, not only those convenient to Israel, be implemented. If Israel cooperated in this manner, it could make progress towards peace.

Sasson believes there is quite a difference between the King's attitude and that of Rifa'i. The King believes the Jews must prove their sincere desire for peace to the Jordanian people, and wants the return of Naharayim for this reason. After Israel responds to his request, his government can open official peace negotiations from which both sides will gain. Rifa'i, by contrast, places full emphasis on the Rhodes agreement even though he regards it as an agreement of surrender. He wants to appear before the Jordanian people and the Arab world as the man who spared them the disgrace of this agreement. Rifa'i is

trying to take the negotiations onto a new tack, demanding Israeli concessions in exchange for implementation of the Rhodes agreement. Sasson fears that Rifa'i is trying to set a trap for both Israel and Abdallah. With respect to Israel, he wants to take all the stakes in return for peace, while not making peace; with respect to the King, he wants to prove that by implementing the entire Rhodes agreement he will have succeeded in gaining not only Naharayim and Kilometer 78[3] but also the trust of the Jordanian people and the Arab world, thus setting the stage for the hoped-for peace. Sasson hopes that Shiloah will be alert to Rifa'i's intentions, and be wary of them.

Notes

1. See No. 8 and n. 2, *ibid.*
2. The report has not been traced, but see No. 13 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. See No. 11, n. 3.

38. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 29 January 1951

Note

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5, and No. 34.

Editorial Note

Knesset Debate on Israel's Policy in the Fifth U.N. General Assembly

On 23, 24, and 30 January 1951 the Knesset discussed Israel's policy in the U.N. General Assembly. Sharett began with a sweeping review of the Israel delegation's activity in the Assembly. First he described the debates and resolutions on Palestine, including Jerusalem, the refugees, and the Conciliation Commission; he ended by reporting on Israel's involvement in the Korea issue.

With reference to the refugees, Sharett spoke at length about how "the Arab campaign" for the refugees' repatriation had "failed", and asserted that support in the U.N. for the very idea of repatriating the refugees was dwindling. As for compensating the Arabs, Sharett stated: "Now as before, we are facing the problem of paying compensation. We have always declared our willingness to do this within the framework of comprehensive peace, and when such negotiations take place, we, too, shall demand compensation for war damage caused to us. One might adopt a different approach to this issue only if it

becomes clear that the isolation and resolution of compensation separately from the other issues would contribute towards eliminating the refugees' distress and allow peace to be achieved more quickly. We think activation of the Reintegration Fund will open the way for real progress, at least towards solution of the refugee problem. For this reason, we announced our willingness to contribute to the Reintegration Fund, in lieu of compensation money to which we are obligated, on condition that these inclusive payments absolve us of having to deal with separate claims by masses of individuals. . . . Our contribution to the Fund will depend on substantial proof that the money will be spent on a final settlement for the refugees, and on assurance that any payment to the Fund will release us from the responsibility for personal claims."

As for Korea, Sharett said that Israel's position rests on two principles: "concern for world peace and strengthening the U.N. as an instrument of peace. . . . Because of our concern for peace we joined in censuring aggression . . . and because of the same concern we endeavoured, stage after stage, to limit and alleviate the conflict . . . and help search for a peaceful resolution." Sharett reviewed the stages of Israel's initiative in the Political Committee, and its implications for Israel's standing in the U.N. (see Editorial Note, pp. 4–5). At the end of his review, Sharett reported on the government's efforts to obtain an aid agreement with the United States on the basis of the Point Four Program.

In the discussion following the foreign minister's statement, members of the opposition sharply criticized Israel's policy, some focusing on matters pertaining directly to Israel and some on Korea. Y. Riftin of Mapam termed Israel's appearance in the U.N. a "total failure", which, he said, stemmed from the delegation's disregard of the factual situation in the Korean conflict; the delegation's behaviour, contrary to the basic rules of the U.N., and an unrealistic view of the balance of political forces and events. He attacked the plan presented by Israel because it did not include the withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea, and accused Israel of submissively accepting the American line.

A Maki (Communist) deputy accused the government of adopting "an anti-national policy, of blindly following in the wake of enemy forces that endanger the country's existence and future in the Middle East". He demanded that the government resist any attempt by foreign powers to incorporate Israel into any aggressive bloc or to have it join military alliances aimed at touching off a new World War.

S. Katz of Herut cautioned against an Israeli initiative that was liable to drag the country into war, but most of his speech was devoted to Israel's policy on the refugees, Jerusalem, and peace with the Arabs.

A General Zionist MK, Peretz Bernstein, asked if it were not high time to abandon non-alignment and side with the West. He took exception to Israel's tendency to intervene in the U.N. in matters not pertaining directly to Israel, and advised that it abstain in any U.N. vote where the country's standing might be undermined.

In reply, Sharett addressed himself to the criticism directed from all sectors of the Knesset, but devoted most of his attention to the disagreement with Mapam and Maki about Israel's Korean policy and relationship with the Soviet Union and the United States.

Mapam and Maki presented separate motions to sum up the debate, mainly comprising rejection of Israel's Korean policy and the foreign minister's announcement of intent to sign an agreement with the United States based on Point 4. Other motions included one by Hillel Kook (Herut) in favour of fostering Israel-U.S. friendship; the coalition's proposal to have the Knesset adopt Sharett's report and statement concerning negotiations on the implementation of Point 4; a Herut MK's declaration objecting to Israel's policy on Jerusalem and the refugees and to acquiescence to Jordanian rule in the West Bank, and expressing amazement that the government agreed to include Israel among the countries about to receive aid under Point 4; and a call by a General Zionist deputy for clarification of Israel's position on the East-West confrontation and support of a departure from Israel's policy of non-alignment towards the two blocs. (*Divrei ha-Knesset,* Third Session of the First Knesset, Vol. VIII, pp. 848–69, 875–85, 914–38.)

39. G. Avner[1] (Tel Aviv) to A. Nissan[2] (Stockholm). 30 January 1951

Copy: 130.02/174/11

Avner discusses the question of the Arab refugees in relation to the Danish government. He refers Nissan to a speech by the Foreign Minister in the Knesset[3] which implied that in the near future the refugee problem would focus on the question of compensation. The Conciliation Commission received instructions to open negotiations with Israel. Israel agreed to start talks outside the framework of peace negotiations with the Arabs, even though it intends to press for a simultaneous start of negotiations on both subjects. The General Assembly resolution[3] justifies the start of negotiations for the payment of compensation before progress is made on the issue of peace. The procedure would be for UNRWA to undertake the settlement of refugees, while the Conciliation Commission would open a bureau in

Jerusalem to conduct negotiations with Israel on matters pertaining to the refugees. The candidate to head the office is Holger Andersen, a Dane. The Americans and the Turks support him. Andersen has promised an answer in the near future. He is experienced in international negotiations. In the 1920s he was active on the international committee that helped to effect population exchanges between Greece and Turkey. This development necessitates action by the legation in Stockholm. (1) To find out to what extent Andersen could receive instructions from the Danish government; this must be clarified with the Danish representative in Stockholm. (2) The Danish Foreign Ministry should be made aware of the problems that may arise in this matter as Sharett defined them in his Knesset speech: (a) Israel intends to make the issue of compensation dependent on that of peace, knowing full well that in the final analysis it will not be able to insist on this demand; (b) the Conciliation Commission's demand that Israel increase the sum of one million Israeli pounds that it originally promised to the absorption fund; (c) Israel's insistence on the principle that this payment releases her from personal claims by the refugees; (d) Israel insists that it will pay only for abandoned lands that had been cultivated, and this in accordance with the value at which the landowners, themselves, had assessed their lands for income tax purposes during the Mandate period; one can assume that there will be a demand for payment according to the present value of the land, as well as for uncultivated land and other real estate; Israel will not agree to this; (e) payment of compensation would obligate UNRWA to settle the recipients in Arab countries; Israel's payment of these sums to the reintegration fund would release it from any financial obligation to those refugees.

Avner directs Nissan to clarify whether the Danish Foreign Ministry would be willing to receive explanatory material on the question of the refugees in order to brief their candidate for the committee. He assumes that the Danish reply will state that their candidate is a U.N. official and does not receive instructions from their Foreign Ministry. He also fears an unsympathetic attitude on the part of Denmark towards Israel on the refugee question.

Notes

1. Gershon Avner, Director, West European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. Avraham Nissan, Israel Minister to Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland.
3. See Editorial Note above.
4. See Vol. 5, Appendix B.

40. M. Sasson (Tel Aviv) to M. Sharett. 31 January 1951

Copy: 130.02/2408/13

M. Sasson reports on his talk with Abd al-Ghani al-Karmi on 27 January 1951. Karmi said that Sharett's pronouncement in the Knesset on Israel's willingness to compensate the Arabs collectively[1] met with a negative response among property-holders and members of the Jordanian cabinet. The Jordanian ministers who supported the Shiloah-Rifa'i meeting[2] and who favour negotiations with Israel claimed that the major achievement to be expected from a settlement with Israel is the payment of personal compensation. This compensation would secure the property-owners' support for an agreement with Israel. These Jordanian ministers see no point in continuing the negotiations if Israel adopts the principle of collective compensation. A delegation of property-owners that met with Nuri al-Sa'id[3] informed the government that it had no intention of continuing to press for a settlement with Israel as long as Israel did not retract its position on collective compensation. Among the members of the delegation were Ahmad al-Khalil,[5] Hikmat al-Taji, Muhammad Najjar, 'Ali al-Mustaqim, and 'Ali abu Ziyad.

Karmi reported to Sasson about several demands that Rifa'i will present in a memorandum to Israel: (a) a Jordanian demand for the sum Israel promised for the construction of a highway from Kalkilya to Tulkarm; (b) implementation of Paragraph 6(6) of the Rhodes agreement: full compensation for Arabs who lived within the "Triangle" and who had vacated their lands under the agreement; (c) Jordan might agree to waive this compensation if the villagers are allowed free access to their lands and are assured that their harvests can be taken out of Israel; (d) Israel would be given a special route to Mount Scopus with permanent and absolute right of use. The route would run north of the Police School, this on condition that Israel provide Jordan with territory that would permit travel outside the walls from Damascus Gate to Jaffa Gate and thence to Bethlehem.

In an appendix to the document, Sasson attaches the Middle East Division's comments on Israel's compensation policy and the measures proposed by the Division. (a) While there is no reason to change the compensation policy, it should be taken into account that Israel will have to pay personal compensation to a small number of property owners with influence in the Arab countries. (b) In the propaganda it addresses to the Arabs, Israel should reemphasize that the time factor is working against them. Those directly concerned ought to salvage whatever they can, and they can do so only through peace with Israel. (c) Israel would find it worthwhile to begin compensating, on a per-

sonal and partial basis, a small number of affluent persons in Jordan in order to show the others that whoever acts in accordance with Israel's interests will be rewarded. This policy will split the ranks of the affluent class and give Israel room for political manoeuvering. (d) Account should be taken of the fact that a genuine demand for large-scale personal compensation, if ever formulated, may present an obstacle to Jordan's peace efforts. The Jordanian government might find itself under pressure which it probably could not withstand.

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 33–35.
2. See No. 13 and n. 1 *ibid.*, and No. 37 and n. 2 *ibid.*
3. Nuri al-Sa'id, Iraqi Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior.
4. Untraced.
5. Ahmad al-Khalil, Jordanian Representative on the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission from March, 1951.
6. See No. 8, n. 2.

41. Meeting: A. Eban–G. C. McGhee. 31 January 1951

Notes

1. See No. 23.
2. Reference is to an American plan to promote world peace, presented by President Truman in Congress on 8 January 1951. The scheme included economic and social measures intended to bolster U.S. strength and endurance against the Soviet threat. One of its provisions promised military and economic aid to Free World countries.
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 57–58, and Nos. 68, 69, 71 and 72.
4. See Nos. 7 and 24.
5. Burton Y. Berry, Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs.
6. Cf. report on Eban-McGhee talk, *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 566–69.

42. E. Sasson to S. Divon. 31 January 1951

Note

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 57–58, and Nos. 68, 69, 71 and 72.

43. A. Eban to E. Elath (Telegram). 1 February 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5, and No. 34.
2. Kenneth G. Younger, Minister of State, British Foreign Office.

44. A. Eban to the United States Division (Telegram). 2 February 1951

Notes

1. Isaiah L. Kenen, Director of Information at the Israel Consulate in New York and at the Permanent Delegation at the U.N. until mid-February 1951; subsequently Counsellor to the American Zionist Council.
2. Benjamin G. Browdy, President of the Zionist Organization of America.
3. Jacob K. Javits, Republican member of the U.S. House of Representatives and its Foreign Affairs Committee.
4. Vladimir Popović, Yugoslav Ambassador to the United States and Head of the Yugoslav Delegation to the Fifth Session of the U.N. General Assembly.
5. Elpidio Quirino, President of the Philippines.
6. Vijaya L. Pandit, Indian Ambassador to the United States.
7. Robert R. Nathan, Director of the Jewish Agency Economic Department in New York, and Economic Adviser to the Israel Embassy in Washington.
8. Alexander (Sasha) Goldberg, Managing Director, Fertilizers and Chemicals, Ltd., Haifa.

45. M. Keren (Washington) to the United States Division. 2 February 1951

Orig.: 130.20/2479/8

Keren reports on a talk he held with L. Jones[1] on 1 February 1951 before travelling to the Istanbul conference.[2] The talk was frank and cordial, but did not touch upon practical matters. Jones pointed to the gap perceived by the State Department between Israeli public opinion and government and embassy operations. He said that Israel's friends in the United States are doing it a disservice. He described a talk with Blaustein[5] and Celler,[6] in which Blaustein tried to portray Israel as an American bridgehead in the Middle East. Jones rejected Blaustein's opinion that Israel's non-alignment policy was dead, although he assumes that it is dying. Keren admitted that Israelis are not aware of the volume of American aid, and that he, too, learned only recently

that U.S. shipments of food commodities to Israel far exceed the quota Israel deserves as warranted by its population. Jones expressed the hope that Israel will not publicize this fact so as not to provoke the Arabs. After the 35 million dollar loan to Israel was approved, he said, a representative of some Arab country approached him every day and explained that by giving this money to Israel the United States had demonstrated its bad intentions and "dark purposes". He added that the Arabs, too, wanted a gift of food after seeing that Israel was receiving it. The very day they applied for this, distribution was halted. It was hard to convince them that there was no political trickery involved.

Notes

1. Lewis Jones, Director, Office of Near Eastern Affairs, United States Department of State.
2. The heads of the American missions in the Middle East convened in Istanbul on 14–21 February. See report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 50–76.
3. See No. 41.
4. See No. 52 and n. 1 *ibid.*
5. Jacob Blaustein, President of the American Jewish Committee and director of a number of oil corporations in the United States.
6. Emanuel Celler, member of the United States House of Representatives (Democrat); member of the American Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Committee.
7. Monnet B. Davis, U.S. Ambassador-Designate to Israel.

46. S. Eliashiv (Prague) to the East European Division. 2 February 1951

Coded Tel. P951; Inc.: 130.09/2342/16

Eliashiv reports on having held a good talk with Široký,[1] in which he sought an emigration arrangement with Czechoslovakia similar to that made with Poland. Široký asked for facts and figures, and promised to treat the matter positively. It was agreed that Eliashiv would present his request in writing. As for arms procurements, Široký explained why the Czechs could not at present respond to Israel's request.[2]

Notes

1. Vilem Široký, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Joint Deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia.

2. Široký explained that the Czechs could not meet Israel's acquisitions request because they were under constant surveillance, and nothing could be shipped "without the Americans' finding out about it". He added that "If we shared a border with you it would be easier". (See report attached to Eliashiv's letter to Levavi, 4 February 1951, 130.11/2493/4.)

47. Working Paper: Outline of E. Elath's Reply to Sir William Strang. 2 February 1951

Note

1. See No. 18, cf. No. 53.

48. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to S. Eliashiv (Prague). 5 February 1951

Coded Tel. IC490; Outg.: 130.09/2342/14

In reply to Eliashiv's cable,[1] Sharett writes that the talks with Israel's envoys initiated by the Egyptian chargé d'affaires in Prague presumably resulted from his personal inclinations and not from orders received from Cairo. Nevertheless, Sharett instructs Eliashiv to respond to the initiative "but to speak nonchalantly and vaguely, without displaying the attachment of excessive importance to it", and to claim that the Egyptians' refusal to negotiate with Israel is rooted in "emotions and complexes, and not in clear-headed political judgment". The Egyptians are losing ground in the international arena as a result of Israel's attacks on them in the U.N., and their hopes of bringing Israel to her knees are vain because the United States will not allow this to happen during the present world emergency. Peace with Israel, by contrast, will have beneficial effects on Egypt's status in the United States.

Note

1. Eliashiv wrote that the Egyptian chargé d'affaires in Prague "had on several occasions shown an inclination to converse with our people". He asked for Sharett's instructions on how to treat this initiative (2 January 1951, 130.09/2342/16).

49. M. Shalit (Washington) to Z. Aranne.[1] 5 February 1951

Copy:[2] IMDEA 532.73/169

Shalit raises several topics that are troubling Israel's representatives in Washington. (a) Public information—Shalit expresses concern about how uninformed the Israeli public is about Israel's foreign policy. He is astounded by remarks made by a General Zionist MK,[5] who demanded that Israel align itself with the West while at the same time abstaining in votes on the Korean issue. Shalit cites other examples that demonstrate Israeli public ignorance about the extent of Israel's economic dependence on the West and the United States. He says that Israel cannot continue presenting the United States with demands without providing something in return. The votes on Korea and China in the U.N. were Israeli "awards" to the Americans, so to speak. The public in Israel must be informed that most American Jews are extremely Western-oriented. This Jewish community, which supports Israel materially and politically, is pressuring it to take a pro-Western line. Without the support of American Jewry, Israel would lack the foundation on which its economic demands of the United States rest.

(b) As for Israel's political policy—Shalit and his colleagues in the embassy believe Israel foreign policy should be based on day-to-day interests, and should aspire to develop the country as quickly as possible. This policy must remove obstacles to the receipt of economic support in every possible form. The major consideration in Israel's foreign policy should be which political line to adopt so that Israel's representatives can mobilise the greatest possible volume of resources to strengthen the country. In its present circumstances, Israel cannot forgo immediate interests in order to remain true to abstract ideals.

(c) Exploiting the international situation to expand Israel's economy—Israeli industry should be integrated into the Western industrial system. Successful talks were conducted in Washington on developing the country's military industry. The government approved the measures taken by Israel's representatives, but this notwithstanding, did not agree to show the American military attachés Israel's military industry; Israel's envoys in Washington found themselves in a very strange situation.[7] Shalit believes that if a certain political line has been adopted, all conclusions stemming from it should be drawn, with no half-way measures.

While Israel's demands of the West are economic in nature, the West's demands of Israel will be strategic. Israeli public opinion does not seem to be ready for this. There is a gap between the government and the public, and it must be narrowed by information activities

aimed at all levels of the population. Shalit is astounded by the apprehensions concerning Mapam, and is sure that appropriate public information would change the situation.

(d) Israel's policy towards Great Britain and the United States — Israel should develop its ties with both, but should place the emphasis on the United States for two reasons: (a) American public opinion can guarantee that agreements with Israel will be implemented; (b) American Jewry will be displeased if Israel shows a preference for Great Britain; at least the ceremonial part of its activities should be conducted in the United States.

Notes

1. Zalman Aranne, Chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.
2. The copy in our possession was sent to Ben-Gurion.
3. Shimon Peres, Head of the Israel Defence Ministry Mission in the United States.
4. The typist evidently omitted an entire line in the original.
5. Peretz Bernstein, Member of Knesset (General Zionist). See Editorial Notes, pp. 33–35, 4–5.
6. Here (and subsequently) the error is in the original: "the blockade".
7. See No. 17 and n. 1 *ibid.*, and Nos. 22 and 26.
8. Yehuda Giladi, Assistant Air Attaché at the Israel Embassy in Washington.
9. The appendix is omitted here.

50. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to the United States Division. 5 February 1951

Copy: 130.20/2461/10

Bendor reports on a session of the conference of military attachés on 2 February,[1] with the participation of the Prime Minister, senior members of the General Staff, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials. The meeting was devoted to remarks by Sharett[2] on the international situation and how it influences Israel. Sharett's conclusions were: (a) policy should be adopted that would attain the most aid with the fewest commitments; (b) Israel should be wary of declarations of neutrality because they do no good; (c) Sharett opposed absolute and explicit relationships — to prevent the creation of *faits accomplis* that amount to more than written or oral declarations.

Ben-Gurion said the Israeli people is willing to fight for three things: its sovereignty (taking an independent Israeli stance), its freedom (the nature of the country's domestic regime), and its purpose (ingathering the exiles). Ben-Gurion noted that there are troubling indications of domestic decline, of deterioration and the spread of

nihilism among youth. Public morale must be bolstered in view of the three objectives he presented.

Notes

1. See No. 54 for report on the additional meeting at the conference.
2. The minutes containing his remarks are in File 130.02/2458/4.

51. S. Eliashiv (Budapest) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 7 February 1951

Coded Tel. BU219; Inc.: 130.09/2295/9

Eliashiv and Bentsur[1] visited Berey.[2] Berey notified them that the Hungarians did not accept the Israeli memorandum.[3] They rejected Poland as an example; since assimilation is rife in Hungary, those who emigrate do so for other than national reasons. After some argument, it was agreed to resume the talks after the immigration quota expired. Berey expressed displeasure with the volume of trade between the two countries. Eliashiv said that prices in Hungary were high, and Berey agreed to explore the matter.[4]

Notes

1. Shmuel Bentsur, chargé d'affaires *ad interim*, First Secretary and Consul at the Israel Legation in Hungary.
2. Andor Berey, Hungarian Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs.
3. Untraced, but see Vol. 5, Nos. 409, 425 and 508.
4. See report on this conversation in document dated 9 February 1951, 130.11/2502/51.

Editorial Note

Government Discussion of Relations with Germany

One of the topics discussed by the government on 8 February was relations with Germany. Sharett reported on a proposal supported by several government ministers and officials to send another note to the Powers spelling out Israel's demand for $1 billion in reparations from Germany. The timing was apt, Sharett explained, because the Four Powers were expected to convene soon to arrange German affairs. Ben-Gurion and others supported the proposal, and the government adopted the following resolution: "The minister of foreign affairs will

consult with the Jewish Agency Executive and other public bodies in the matter of approaching the governments of the Occupation Powers to secure reparations from Germany to Israel and the restitution of Jewish property."

Sharett also raised the question of contacts with German officials. He said Germany was making unexpectedly rapid progress in rejoining the international community, and the policy of shunning its representatives could not be sustained for long. He inquired about the procedure to use in securing visas to enter Germany. Thus far such visas were issued by the occupation authorities, but since German consulates had been established throughout Europe, the question of whether Israelis might apply to them had come up. A similar problem concerned how to reply to enquiries from the German police on routine police matters.

The tone of the deliberations led Sharett to conclude that it was best at that juncture to avoid contact with Germany as much as possible, but consular and police contact was permissible where there was no alternative. With respect to international associations, Israel should continue objecting to Germany's admission, but should not quit any association that admitted Germany. (See Sharett's memorandum to Eytan, 7 February 1951 [i.e., 8 February 1951], 130.02/2413/2.)

52. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 9 February 1951

Notes

1. Jones met with Elath on 6 February, accompanied by Ambassador-Designate M. Davis. They discussed Israel's situation and its attitude towards the Arab world in view of the international scene. It was Elath's impression that Davis was not well-versed in the situation and that he would do as the State Department directed him. Jones said that Israel's wish to be the West's bridgehead in the Middle East was dangerous to Israel and liable to rupture American relations with the Arab world. He was particularly opposed to a proposal to pre-position emergency stores in Israel (Elath's telegram to Comay, LI18, 6 February 1951, 130.09.2318/8).
2. For a full report on the talks, see Elath to Comay, 8 March 1951, 93.08/338/17.

53. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 9 February 1951

Notes

1. See No. 47.
2. See Editorial Note, pp. 58–59, and Nos. 68, 69, 71 and 72.
3. For a full report on the talks, see Elath to Comay, 22 February 1951, 130.13/2582/4.

4. See summary of the main points of this conversation in Wardrop's memorandum, 12 February 1951, PRO, FO371/91240.

54. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to A. Eban (Washington). 11 February 1951

Orig.: 93.08/338/15

Bendor reports on a session of the conference of military attachés on 9 February 1951,[1] in which the status of foreign military attachés in Israel was discussed. Shiloah and Bendor stressed the importance and benefit to Israel of treating the foreign attachés cautiously yet positively. By contrast, the Deputy Chief of General Staff[2] described the security difficulties involved in according information to foreign attachés, and the Chief of General Staff[3] strenuously attacked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which "served as a convenient address for the foreign attachés to voice their complaints against the Army". Yadin also complained about lack of coordination between the Army and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in transmitting information. Shiloah replied that he knew of no case in which information was transmitted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs without coordination with the Army, and expressed hope that coordination between the two bodies would improve. He said that the Army, for its part, should refrain from intervention in political matters.

Notes

1. See No. 50.
2. Mordecai Makleff.
3. Yigael Yadin.
4. Stuart W. Rockwell, officer in charge of Palestine, Israel and Jordan Affairs, Office of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, until January, 1951. From January: Political Adviser, Department of the Air Force.
5. Reference is to disagreements concerning Paragraph E in Sharett's memorandum to Marshall. See No. 17, n. 1, and No. 22.

55. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to Y. Yadin. 12 February 1951

Copy: 93.08/338/16

Sharett disagrees with Yadin's position at the most recent meeting with the Prime Minister.[1] In his opinion, Yadin views the problem of state security within too narrow a framework. Sharett agrees that

Israel's security depends on the strength and operational ability of the military force, and that the country's security is conditional upon the keeping of its secrets. Sharett believes, however, that the security problem extends beyond the military framework and spills over into the domains of economics, the social system, foreign relations, etc. Sharett stresses the connection between the security problem and immigrant absorption. Immigrant absorption requires capital investments and an increase in production. If immigrant absorption succeeds, it will fortify Israel's defence posture; if it fails, the entire structure may collapse.

Sharett believes Israel is fated to depend on a foreign power for its existence. In view of this dependency, preference in certain contexts should accrue to political rather than military considerations. Sharett is convinced that the Prime Minister's decision was correct under the given circumstances.

Note

1. 7 February. Sharett, Yadin and Shiloah participated in the meeting, where one of the topics discussed was that of relations with the American military attaché (see No. 17, n. 1, and No. 22). Yadin objected to allowing the American attaché visit Military Industry plants; Sharett and Shiloah favoured such visits. Ben-Gurion tipped the scales against Yadin and ordered him to admit the attaché. Yadin demanded this in writing; Ben-Gurion complied on 8 February. The Prime Minister wrote that "to strengthen our demand that the United States provide us with raw materials, machinery, experts, and other kinds of economic aid, and to demonstrate our industrial and, in particular, our military prowess, just as we show the various attachés a set of military enterprises, so should we show [them to] the American attaché. . . . The Military Industry and other miscellaneous plants epitomize our capabilities in this regard". Ben-Gurion recommended that the deputy chief of general staff meet with the American attaché "and impress upon him that he must maintain secrecy, and that anything he learns during the visits and the talks is meant for him and his superiors only, and without our permission must not be passed on to anyone or to any foreign government, even a friendly one" (IMDEA, 532/73/169; Ben-Gurion Diary, 7 February, 1951, *ibid.*). For Gurney's impression of the visit to the Military Industry factories, see Makleff's telegram to the Israel Embassy in Washington, 9 March 1951, 130.09/2308/15.

56. S. Hyman to G. Meron (Telegram). 12 February 1951

Notes

1. Semah Cecil Hyman, Economic Counsellor at the Israel Embassy in Washington.
2. Gershon Meron, Director of the Economic Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

57. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to M. Fischer (Paris). 12 February 1951

Orig.: 93.02/172/9

Eytan comments on Avner's letter of 23 January[2] concerning "France and Israeli public opinion". Eytan agrees with Avner that the French minister in Israel[3] failed to exploit opportunities to generate better understanding of France and its policies in the Israeli public. He compares the efforts Great Britain had made over the past two years to strengthen ties with Israel by means of visits of government officials, MPs, etc., with the paucity of French activity. Apart from the visits of famous Jews such as Jules Moch[5] and Mayer,[6] the French have shown no special interest in Israel. Eytan attributes this situation to Guyon's total indifference towards the Israeli enterprise — an indifference which has since developed into unbridled criticism of Israel and even enmity towards her. In view of the situation, Eytan does not rule out turning to the press on this matter.[7]

Notes

1. *Sic.* Reference is to Fischer's letter to Eytan, 29 January 1951, in which he asks Eytan for his opinion on Avner's letter (below) (130.02/2539/14).
2. In file 93.02/172/9.
3. Edouard-Félix Guyon.
4. Richard Crossman, Member of Parliament (Labour).
5. Jules Moch, French Minister of Defence, July 1950–August 1951.
6. Daniel Mayer, Member of French National Assembly (Socialist), formerly Minister of Labour (1946–49). Visited Israel in December, 1949.
7. See also Sharett's reply to Fischer, 11 February 1981, 93.02/172/9.

58. D. Ben-Gurion [Tel Aviv]: diary note. 13 February 1951

IMDEA

Ben-Gurion talked with Shiloah before the latter's meeting that day with King Abdallah.[1] Shiloah wanted to know what to reply if the King should propose that Israel make concessions at Naharayim and on the Eilat road to Jordan in exchange for passage of Israelis to Mount Scopus. Ben-Gurion agreed that the offer should be accepted, but expressed doubt as to how worthwhile a political arrangement with Abdallah might be, for the following reasons: (1) The situation in Jordan was not stable; it rested on one man who might die at any

moment and who himself was dependent on Great Britain. (2) A political settlement with Jordan was liable to encumber and postpone an arrangement with Egypt. (3) Only peace with Egypt would guarantee an end to the boycotting of Israel in Asia and Africa. (4) An arrangement with Jordan would bolster Great Britain's toehold in the area. (5) Israel was not interested in committing itself to its preposterous borders. (6) An arrangement with Egypt would regularize Israel's relations with the Arab and Muslim world, would open Israel's southern and northern borders, and would provide it with important economic relations. (7) Egypt was a more stable country than Jordan, and there was no conflict of interests between it and Israel.

Note

1. The talk was held as planned. The Jordanian Prime Minister did not participate. Shiloah, reporting on it to the British envoy in Tel Aviv, said that the king initiated the conversation only to keep communications with Israel open. He asked Israel to yield on Naharayim as a first step towards opening the discussion on all other topics. Shiloah turned down this request, noting the understanding already achieved in this matter with Rifa'i (No. 13). At a later stage of the talk, Abdallah criticized Jordan's representative on the Armistice Commission and asserted that he was about to replace him. (See Helm's telegram to Bevin, 16 February 1951, PRO, FO371/91385; Helm to Kirkbride, 17 February 1951, PRO, FO/91364.)

59. Meeting: E. Herlitz–J. Waldo (Washington, 12 February 1951, document dated 14 February)

Report: 93.08/337/21

The talk was held following an initiative by Waldo. Herlitz began by expressing her concern about the State Department's attitude towards Israel "as part of the region". She especially drew his attention to comments made by Davis and Jones to Elath as recorded in Cable IWA156.[1] Waldo said that Davis had meant to say that he hoped he could view the Israel problem in a general regional context as well. Presumably he had not intended to say that he is the United States' representative to the entire region, because an ambassador can be a representative to one country only.

Herlitz drew Waldo's attention to McGhee's latest speech, in which he tried to justify the Arabs' non-alignment policy and made no mention of Israel. He behaved thus in other similar cases. Jones' comments in London should be understood in this vein. Waldo tried to explain that Jones had meant to say that even if the United States were to reach the conclusion that it was desirable for strategic

reasons to arm Israel, it would not do so lest this action upset the Middle East balance of power and provoke an uproar in the Arab countries. However, he expressed amazement that there had been no follow-up to the talks with Acheson[4] and Marshall.[5] He also said that Israel had many opponents in the Defense Department, and the fact that Israel had not found a way to cooperate with the American military attachés in Tel Aviv[6] had caused more damage than had been estimated.

According to Waldo, it was precisely in the Defense Department that there were officials who supported plans to establish enterprises in Israel for the entire region's development. If the military attachés in Tel Aviv could dispatch at least one report spelling out the possibilities of military production in Israel, the plan could then be examined from its practical side. Moreover, if the Army people or defence officials were to accept this plan, the State Department would presumably present no opposition. Waldo said the fight for export licenses for weapons for Israel was put up mainly by Rockwell, who managed to obtain them over the Defense Department's angry objections.

Waldo expressed regret about the incidents on the Israel-Jordan border, in Wadi Araba[7] and Sharafat,[8] but agreed with Herlitz that some people accorded them disproportionate significance. He said that these occurrences increased support for the Arab side in the Defense Department and did nothing to bring a solution any closer.

Notes

1. 8 February 1951, 93.01/2207/14. For the contents of the conversation, see No. 52 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. James G. McDonald, U.S. Ambassador to Israel until December 1950.
3. Three words are omitted here.
4. See Vol. 5, No. 509; cf. *FRUS,* 1950, V, p. 1086.
5. See Vol. 5, Nos. 509, 510, and 517.
6. See No. 17, n. 1, No. 22, and No. 55, n. 1.
7. See Vol. 5, No. 486, n. 1, and No. 489, n. 4, 5.
8. In late January and early February, several Israeli civilians were killed or wounded by infiltrators and Jordanian Legionnaires operating in and around Jerusalem. In retaliation, Israeli forces blew up houses in the Arab village of Sharafat; in these actions, according to Jordanian sources, 10 persons were killed and 18 wounded.

60. A. Eban [Washington] to M. Sharett. 14 February 1951

Coded Tel. WIA678; Inc.: 93.01/2207/14

Following the parliamentary crisis,[1] Eban seeks to draw Sharett's

attention to two facts: (1) The foreign aid bill for Israel will be tabled in a few more weeks; (2) in another two months the large-scale Bonds campaign will be announced. The prospects for the success of the two plans will suffer unless a convincing impression of the Israeli government's stability is created. Restoring this impression is vital for the national cause. If elections are called, they should be held promptly. Eban requests that his cable be forwarded to the parties concerned, especially the President.[2]

Notes

1. Reference is to the coalition crisis concerning education in the immigrant and transit camps, which reached a climax on 14 February 1951 with the Government's resignation. The Government tabled the subject of education for debate in the Knesset after it had failed to settle the dispute with the ministers of the National Religious Front on ways of ensuring religious education in the camps. The Minister of Education issued a statement on the subject on 5 February, and the Knesset discussed it on 12–14 February. The Knesset rejected the Government's statement by a vote of 49:42. Ben-Gurion submitted his resignation to the President the same day. Attempts to establish a stable Government failed, and several weeks later the Knesset called new elections, to be held on 30 July 1951.
2. In reply, Sharett telegraphed stating that Eban's telegram had been read out in a Government meeting and forwarded to the President, but that, in his opinion, "The Government will stage no retreat at all; its resolution is the last word, backed by the party's firm resolve". Sharett also turned down Eban's request to move up the elections, "in view of certain immutable, insurmountable facts of legal and practical nature". . . . Sharett added that "Under such circumstances, we have no choice but to make a vigorous effort to dispel doubts and suspicions by emphasizing staunchly the permanence of our political goals, which are rooted in the very basics of our existence, nourished by the imperatives of our essential needs that are unaffected by party politics, unimpaired by the crisis, and not susceptible to challenge, whatever the election results may be" (17 February 1951, 130.09/2308/15).

61. S. Eliashiv (Prague) to M. Sharett. 14 February 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc. 130.09/2342/16

Eliashiv reports on his talk with Rákosi[1] concerning *aliya.* Rákosi explained why the Hungarians could not permit continued emigration, from both the Jewish and the Hungarian standpoints. It was agreed to complete the departure of the 3,000 emigrants. Rákosi also agreed to discuss the emigration question afterwards, but left little room for hope.[2]

Notes

1. Mátyás Rákosi, Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary-General of the Hungarian Workers' Party.
2. See S. Eliashiv, Report No. 5, 16 February 1951, 130.11/2492/22.

62. Z. Argaman[1] (Moscow) to A. Levavi.[2] 16 February 1951

Orig.: 130.11/2492/16

In continuation of his letter of 8 January 1951,[3] [. . .][4] Argaman regretfully notes the growing estrangement between Soviet Jews and the Israel legation, and provides several examples: (1) Not a single Soviet Jew has either visited the legation or applied to it in writing in four months. (2) The only case was in November, when a resident of Grodno visited to inquire about his family in Israel. (3) Formal contact with the Rabbi has almost totally ceased, and the mission staff feels as if shunned when visiting the synagogue. (4) Only on infrequent and random occasions is it possible to engage a Jew in conversation, and even then, the conversation cannot be led in the right direction. (5) There is a feeling that the very mention of "Israel Legation" or "State of Israel" intimidates and terrifies the Jews, and few of them summon the courage to initiate a conversation. (6) It is altogether impossible to determine the actual extent of danger that awaits Jews who visit the legation, but it is known that contact with the legation is totally forbidden. (7) Restrictions notwithstanding, the Jews are thirsty for a live verbal contact with Israel, and are avid in their desire to emigrate there. (8) The authorities are undoubtedly keeping the legation staff under very close surveillance, lest they come into contact with Jews. It is very hard to elude the Soviet "escorts" who trail the legation people. (9) By all appearances, the tension is not as great in the outlying cities, and the Jews there are less apprehensive than those in Moscow about meeting with foreigners. (10) It is usually easier for Jews to establish contact with foreigners from other countries than with Israelis. It is Argaman's conclusion that Soviet Jewry is dying out, even though it is imbued with national spirit. He describes it as having been divorced from its spiritual and cultural life, and as being in the grip of racial discrimination and repression of all national sentiment. He expresses fear that Jewish youth will progressively assimilate, and, with it, the entire Soviet Jewish community will perish.

Notes

1. Zeev Argaman, Counsellor at the Israel Legation in U.S.S.R.; till June 1951, Chargé d'Affaires *a.i.*
2. Arye Levavi, Director of the East European Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
3. Argaman reported on the activity of the Israel Legation in Moscow in a letter headed "Our legation in Moscow: its status and sphere of activity". In Paragraph A he described the minister's contacts with the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the attitude of the Soviet press to Israel, and contacts with the Soviet Ministry for Foreign Trade (130.02/2410/18).
4. Paragraph B of the letter, dealing with the legation's contacts with the diplomatic corps, is omitted here.

63. A. Eban (Washington) to M. Sharett. 16 February 1951

Copy: 130.02/2382/22

Eban analyses the Knesset debate on Korea.[1] He praises Sharett's remarks and expresses disappointment over the comments of the Mapam MKs, who sharply criticize Israel's foreign policy on this question. He writes that in their Knesset speeches the Mapam MKs cut the last thread that tied them to Zionism. This phenomenon makes it possible to treat Israeli-Soviet relations as an independent matter, irrespective of concern for the Israeli Left's sensitivities and desire to maintain a broad domestic base for Israel's policy. Eban expresses great disappointment over the comments of several General Zionist colleagues, who argued that Israel was incapable of saving the whole world, and its role should be limited to the obeisant silence that a small country should keep. Eban opposes this provincial attitude on principle; he adds that Israel's representatives did not try to be conspicuous during the Korean debate, and only because of the debate's circumstances did they engage in activity that resulted in general admiration for Israel.

The American Jewish reaction to Israel's action was most positive. Eban writes that "an electric throb passed through this Diaspora as it beheld Israel playing a major role in the international effort to save the peace". He explains that the American Jews have perceived Israel thus far as a supplicant for aid and favours, and now, for the first time, Israel comes forth as doing something for the United States rather than presenting it with demands.

Eban rejects the "small nation" attitude, cautioning that this approach undermines the foundations of the struggle for the State's establishment. That struggle is based on the conception of a "great nation" that presents the world with great demands.

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 33–35.
2. A letter sent by Keith Shann, Australian representative at the U.N., to Osmond Fuhrman, Australian Minister to Israel, on 17 January 1951. It spoke of the performance of the Israel delegation to the Fifth U.N. Assembly. I.S.A. has only a cross-reference with a short summary of the letter (File 130.02/2414/4).
3. See No. 60, n. 1.
4. Joseph J. Schwartz, Director-General of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. From 1951, Executive Vice-Chairman of the United Jewish Appeal.
5. See Eban to Sharett, 16 February 1951, 130.02/2420/12.

64. Meeting: W. Eytan–C. de Boisanger[1] (Tel Aviv, 18 February 1951)

Report: 130.02/2441/4

Boisanger reports on the impressions he gained during his visit to Egypt. He met with the Egyptian Foreign Minister, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, ambassadors of the Western powers and Turkey, and various Arab notables. In his official talks he found no change whatsoever in Egypt's attitude towards peace with Israel, although he detected a more liberal and optimistic tone in a couple of talks with less important people. Nevertheless, a change has occurred in the Arab League's attitude towards the refugee problem. Although it vigourously insists on the principle of the return of the refugees, the League is willing to discuss their temporary settlement in their present countries of residence. Egypt has a plan for the settlement of 20,000 refugees in the Sinai Peninsula. Boisanger expressed doubt that the programme would be implemented because of its high cost. He suggested that Israel, too, should agree to accept and resettle a limited number of refugees at a subsequent stage. The time for this was not yet ripe, nor should it be precipitated so as not to arouse false hopes and adversely affect the process of resettling the refugees in the Arab countries. Boisanger said that two major motives behind the change were the humanitarian factor and the impact of the international situation. With respect to the blocked deposits, the Arab governments acceded to the Israeli offer to release £100 in each case, but rejected the condition that the sums be returned to them only when a peace treaty was concluded. Eytan explained to Boisanger that Israel could not transfer funds to the Arab countries and thus strengthen them as long as a state of peace did not exist between them. Boisanger announced that he would send Servoise[2] to Cairo for discussions on the blocked deposits. Later in the talk, Boisanger reported

on the possibility that Andersen would be appointed Director of the Refugee Office and that Berncastle[3] would be appointed to this office as well.

Notes

1. Claude B. de Boisanger, French representative on the U.N. Conciliation Commission until July 1951; from July, head of American Section, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. René Servoise, Economic Adviser to the Conciliation Commission.
3. John M. Berncastle, former Senior Land Officer in the British Mandatory Government in Palestine.
4. Ely Palmer, U.S. representative on the Conciliation Commission.
5. Tevfic Rüstü Aras, Turkish representative on the Conciliation Commission.

65. G. Rafael (New York) to A. Eban (Washington). 19 February 1951

Orig.: 93.03/71/19

Sharett met with representatives of the People's Republic of China at the home of the U.N. Secretary-General. During the meeting, the possibility of exchanging delegations between Israel and China was raised.[1] Rafael presents the following reasons in favour of this step: (1) As long as the U.N. deliberations are somewhere between censuring China and punishing it, it is "legally" possible to send a delegation to China. (2) Israel itself has voiced the hypothesis that enhanced Chinese contact with friendly parties in the U.N. may benefit the cause of peace. (3) Although it censured China for its aggression, Israel was one of the important voices explaining that China's vital interests must be taken into account in any attempt to resolve the Far East dispute. (4) Israel has not given up on the possibility of mediation and compromise. (5) The coalescence of an Asian-Arab bloc boycotting Israel represents a threat to Israel's international status, and this is contrary to the interests of the Western world. (6) If China agrees to receive an Israeli delegation even though Israel voted in favour of the censure but abstained in the matter of sanctions, this could be viewed as a sign that China is interested in leaving the door open to action by friendly parties. (7) Bengal Rau told Rafael in their latest talk[3] that friendly countries should mount an information campaign on the China issue.

Summing up, Rafael suggests that the Entezam committee, the British, and the Indians should be sounded out as to their reaction to

a visit offer at the present time. If they respond favourably, it will be necessary to take the matter up with the State Department, and if the latter does not object, it will be possible to approach the Chinese ministers in Prague and Moscow to verify their stance on the proposal. Rafael is of the opinion that the visit, if it indeed takes place, would be of great utility both to Israel and to the cause of peace.

Notes

1. The meeting took place in the first week of December, as the U.N. General Assembly debated Korea. Lie convened a meeting between the representatives of several delegations that recognized the PRC, including Israel but excluding the Soviets, with PRC representatives. Sharett informed Eytan of the forthcoming meeting and wrote to him that he greatly appreciated the opportunity to establish relations with the Chinese. At the same time, he was careful to draw no conclusions about the prospects of a settlement in Korea as long as the two superpowers did not wish to achieve one. Eban's telegram mentions the meeting as a *fait accompli*, but contains no details of Sharett's conversation with the Chinese. This letter is the only known report on the talk. (See Sharett's telegram to Eytan, X672, 3 December 1950, and Eban's telegram to Eytan, X696, 9 December 1950, 93.01/2203/2.) During 1950, several senior Foreign Ministry officials supported attempts to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, convinced that the timing was wrong, neither backed nor encouraged them. (See material in File 130.02/2385/31.)
2. Paragraph D is missing in the original.
3. See No. 2.
4. The Committee of Three, charged with establishing the basis for a cease-fire in Korea (see Editorial Note, pp. 4–5).

66. G. Rafael (New York) to A. Eban (Washington). 19 February 1951

Copy: 130.02/2445/1

Rafael sums up the issues discussed in the most recent meeting between members of the Israel Embassy in Washington and the Israel delegation in New York, and clarifies his stance: (1) The discussants emphasized the need to explain American realities to the Israeli public. In Rafael's view, however, not enough emphasis was placed on the need to underscore the degree of independence in act and thought that Israel reserves to itself in its appearances in the international arena. Rafael fears that if Israel's independent stance does not find appropriate expression in the reports sent to Israel, the impression might arise that Israel's judgment is not balanced. (2) The importance

of sustaining Israel's initiative in the U.N. over the coming weeks: Israel's activity over the past few months in the cause of maintaining world peace[2] helped overcome the Arabs' political machinations on both the Jerusalem question and the refugee issue. The constant contact with what takes place at the U.N. helps Israel design and set its policy. (3) Rafael believes it necessary to speed up the domestic consultations on the possibilities of reaching a settlement with the Arabs in view of the grave international situation. (4) In Rafael's opinion, Sharett's proposal to include in applications for U.S. grants-in-aid a certain amount as compensation for the Arabs is exceedingly constructive and useful. He suggests that this request be based on the argument that Israel lacks the volume of foreign currency needed to rehabilitate the Arabs in the neighbouring countries, for which reason compensation should be paid in Israeli currency at the disposal of a counterpart fund. This is the method used by the Marshall Plan, and the President suggested it in the context of aid to India. Rafael quotes an excerpt from the President's letter to Congress in the latter regard: " . . . Similarly, we would expect the Government of India to deposit in a special account local currency equivalent to the proceeds from the sale in India of the grain we supply on a grant basis. This account would be used for the development and improvement of the Indian economy. . . . Such counterpart funds would offer a splendid opportunity for the improvement of Indian agriculture, the development of important natural resources and industries, and other projects of benefit to the people of India". . . . (5) Rafael proposes that a report on the prospects of peace and war be drawn up and sent to Israel. (6) During the meeting in Washington, Rafael raised the question of how to exploit the United States' war effort as a lever for Israel's development. He believes work should begin on drawing up a comprehensive development plan and gauging Israel's industrial potential. Once this is done, the comprehensive plans should be adjusted to the tremendous military production needs of the Free World. He supports Eban's position that larger American investment in Israel and stronger cooperation with the United States would not adversely affect Israel's sovereignty and independence.

Notes

1. See No. 63, n. 2.
2. See Editorial Notes, pp. 4–5, 15.

67. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions Abroad. 19 February 1951

Coded Tel. P42; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Eytan sends a cable about Robertson's expected visit; the visit is described as a courtesy call following Robertson's assumption of his position. He is coming not for political talks, but rather to size up Israel and gauge its military strength, the extent to which Israel can be relied upon, and the benefit it would provide in wartime. Robertson will not demand British bases in Israel. In its talks with him, Israel will try to make the following points clear: (a) Israel is the only country in the area which will defend itself at any price in the event of attack, and which will fight for its principles and way of life. (b) Israel's ability to wage war and defend itself will be substantially enhanced if it receives appropriate equipment from Great Britain and is enabled to build up stocks of food, fuel and raw materials. (c) There is no possibility of integrating Israel into a regional defence plan as long as it has no accord with the Arabs.

Robertson will not propose any kind of Israeli-British military alliance, and no such alliance will be consummated. Perhaps, however, his visit will result in better British understanding of Israel's needs and potential strength.[1]

Notes

1. Concerning Robertson's talks in Israel, see Editorial Note below, and Nos. 68, 69, 71, and 72.

Editorial Note

Conversation between M. Sharett and B. Robertson

The day he arrived in Israel, 19 February 1951, Robertson met with Sharett in Tel Aviv for a 30-minute conversation. Participating in the talk were M. Comay and Sir Knox Helm, the British minister in Israel. The conversation centred on general matters such as *aliya* from Eastern Europe, German reparations, and West Germany's attitude towards Communism, Europe, and the unification of the two Germanies. Only at the end did the Middle East come up. Robertson confirmed that the Americans were changing their attitude towards the region and were preparing, in concert with the British, for the danger

of a Soviet attack on the Middle East. The Israelis' impression was that Robertson was prepared to accept the hypothesis that Israel would join the West in the event of war with Russia. The Israelis also sensed that he had come to Israel to explore the ways and means of preparing for this contingency, and to size up Israel's military capabilities. (See report on the Sharett-Robertson talk, 19 February 1951, 130.13/2603/7.)

68. Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion–B. Robertson. 20 February 1951

Notes

1. Major Coverdale, Military Assistant to General Robertson.
2. See Vol. 5, No. 248.
3. Cf. corresponding minutes taken by a member of Robertson's staff (attached to Robertson's report of 13 March 1951), and Robertson's telegram to the British Foreign Office, 21 February 1951, PRO, FO371/91240.

69. Meeting: Y. Yadin–B. Robertson (Tel Aviv, 20 February 1951)

Report: 130.13/2603/7

The point of departure for the discussion was the meeting with the Prime Minister.[1] (1) Addressing himself to Middle East defence, Robertson emphasized the difficulty the Russians would face in making inroads in the region because of supply problems, the difficulty of allocating forces, and natural geographic obstacles. (2) According to the General, the Anglo-American defence line will be drawn through Turkey, Iraq, and Iran in the mountains. Vital Western military and economic interests converge on these points. Turkey is a mountainous country and an important military power. Petroleum sources are in Iran and Iraq, and its outlets are in the Mediterranean. Egypt is one of the world's most important strategic spots. (3) On Israel-Arab problems, Robertson stressed that the absence of peace is bothersome, but doing something about it is neither his responsibility nor within his ability. He believes it is in Israel's interest to make peace first with Jordan and then with Egypt, for the following reasons: (a) Jordan and Israel have leaders of stature who want peace and understand how important it is for their respective countries; (b) Egypt's obstinacy. (4) Relations between the I.D.F. and the British Army: Robertson

stressed that he should be trusted not to forward information to the Arabs. He emphasized the importance of his recommendations concerning Israel's arms requests, and stated that the more information he had on Israel's military abilities, the more confidently he could make recommendations. (5) Robertson again clarified that it was in Israel's interest to take a decision on its role in defending the Middle East, but reiterated that Israel would be making its natural contribution to the area's defence if it served as a transitional link between Egypt and the major front, which, he believed, would be in Turkey and Iran. The Chief of General Staff directed Robertson's attention to a view evidently held widely in American circles, by which emphasis in the Middle Eastern countries should be placed on guerrilla training, leaving the use of modern weapons to the British and the Americans. Robertson said that he had heard of no such programmes, adding that such views were contrary to his. (6) The problems of weapons for the I.D.F.—Robertson said that the question of armaments for the I.D.F. was directly associated with the nature of the function it would be asked to serve. In all the Arab countries, he told people whom he met that he would vigorously oppose the supply of weapons that would serve the cause of the private war between Israel and the Arab countries.

Note

1. See No. 68.

70. Meeting: M. Sharett–M. B. Davis (Tel Aviv, 14 February 1951, document dated 20 February 1951)

Report: 93.03/3043/7

Most of the talk was devoted to preparing the Ambassador for the Istanbul conference.[1] Sharett explained that "the ingathering of the exiles" was a matter of historical destiny and a process that must not be delayed. He rejected Davis's assumption that grave economic difficulties were liable to shut off the flow of immigration, and explained that the pace of *aliya* was determined by the need to emigrate from the Diaspora countries, not by Israel's need to absorb immigrants. As examples he mentioned the pressure for emigration from Rumania and Iraq. Sharett stressed that the Yishuv would not be able to bear this burden without a direct allocation from the American Treasury Department. The sum Israel was about to request was a negligible proportion of America's projected financial assistance to other coun-

tries. Without help, Israel faced severe shortages and grave dislocations. The Ambassador replied that any number of countries applied to the United States for help, that its resources were not unlimited, and that there were still factors of instability in Israel-Arab relations that had to be cleared away. Sharett replied that Israel did not disregard these problems, and mentioned in this context Shiloah's meeting of 17 February[3] and Israel's efforts to resolve the disputes with Jordan. Davis was impressed by Sharett's remarks, and expressed satisfaction with the results of the joint meeting of the Jordanian and Israeli Chiefs of Staff.[4]

Sharett noted that Israel was also very interested in reaching a settlement with Egypt, and was devoting much time and effort to exploring possibilities of this kind. He added that if the United States diplomats had any good news about prospects of peace with Egypt or any other Arab country, Israel would welcome that; but if they had no such tidings, they could not expect Israel to ignore its own needs and postpone its development in the meantime.

Sharett said that Israel was basing its demand for aid on its own needs and on its development processes; its right to aid was not contingent on that of the Arab countries. Israel would not oppose aid to the Arab countries, and in fact views positively the extension of aid to them for resettlement of the refugees. Sharett noted the Arab League's decision in favour of resolving the refugee problem by resettling them in the Arab countries as a turning-point of great potential importance. He said that the United States would register a great accomplishment if it seized the opportunity to try to advance matters by offering financial aid towards the refugees' resettlement; by so doing, it would be expediting progress towards a final settlement and peace. The Ambassador was aware of the League's decision and agreed that it should be regarded as important.

Sharett reiterated that aid to Israel should not be linked to aid for the Arab countries, and cited the Export-Import Bank's loan[5] as evidence of this. He pointed at two basic differences between Israel and the Arab countries: (1) Israel was undergoing tremendously intensive development and population growth processes; (2) only in Israel did the population at large treasure the cause of safeguarding democracy.

It was Sharett's impression towards the end of the talk that the Ambassador had understood his message. He thanked Sharett for his remarks, and promised to give his conclusions serious attention.

Notes

1. See No. 45, n. 2.
2. See No. 60, n. 1.

3. *Sic.* Reference is evidently to a meeting with Abdallah on 13 February (No. 58, n. 1).
4. On 13 February the Deputy Chief of General Staff, M. Makleff, met with his Jordanian counterpart, A. al-Jundi. A compromise was reached in the dispute concerning Kilometer 78 on the Eilat road: Israeli traffic on a short section of the road would cease. Both parties undertook to act towards preventing infiltration, and withdrew a large number of complaints that had been submitted to the Armistice Commission.
5. See No. 5, n. 1.

71. Meeting: Y. Yadin–B. Robertson (Tel Aviv, 21 February 1951)

Report: 130.13/2603/7

The Chief of General Staff opened the discussion. He wished to clarify several problems to Robertson: (a) Structure of the army—the COGS presented Robertson with an overview of the I.D.F.'s composition. He devoted particular attention to the reserves system, and noted the similarity between Israel's and Britain's reserves problem. (b) Security—the COGS pointed to three reasons for Israel's special sensitivity concerning intelligence: (1) the proximity of the enemy; (2) the size of the enemy — six Arab states; and (3) the British Army's role in the Arab Legion command. The COGS explained that the kind of information kept strictly secret by the I.D.F. was tactical in nature: location of units and other matters that are of no concern to General Robertson's headquarters but were of concern to the Arab Legion. Yadin cautioned Robertson against relying on the safeguarding of secrets in the Middle East, and mentioned as evidence rumours that Nazim al-Qudsi[2] had suggested, in his talk with Robertson, disarming Israel as a condition for Syria's joining the West if war broke out. Robertson appeared stunned to hear this information, and promised that he would order the military attachés to refrain from requesting tactical information and to settle for strategic aspects.[4]

Notes

1. Illegible word in the original.
2. Nazim al-Qudsi, Prime Minister of Syria until 27 March 1951.
3. See No. 72.
4. Cf. Robertson's report in memorandum of 1 March 1951, PRO, FO371/91240.

72. Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion–B. Robertson. 21 February 1951

Notes

1. On 21 February, the Knesset's three opposition factions—Maki (Israel Communist Party), Mapam, and Herut—tabled motions for the agenda on General Robertson's visit to Israel. The three factions attacked the government for agreeing to hold political and military discussions with the representatives of a power that had fought against Israel's establishment; they demanded that the government explain its policy, cautioned against Israeli commitments to Britain, and demanded that the Knesset discuss the visit forthwith. (See *Divrei ha-Knesset*, Third Session of First Knesset, Vol. VIII, pp. 1162–65.) Regarding British interest in the reaction of Israeli public opinion to Robertson's visit, see Helm to Bevin, 2 March 1951, PRO, FO371/91732.
2. See No. 68.
3. Archibald Percival Wavell, Commander of British troops in Palestine and Trans-jordan in 1937–38 and British Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East, 1939–41.
4. Admiral Sir John Edelsten, Commander-in-Chief, British Mediterranean Station. Edelsten met Ben-Gurion on 26 June 1950, on which day Ben-Gurion wrote in his diary: "[Edelsten] tried to persuade [me] that British policy had changed, and I said to him: in public opinion—yes. In the government—yes. In the Foreign Ministry—no! He disagrees with that assessment, and wants a special talk with me" (IMDEA).
5. Cf. minutes taken by a member of Robertson's staff (attached to Robertson's report of 10 March 1951) and Robertson's telegram to the British Foreign Office, 22 February 1951, PRO, FO371/91240.

73. M. Keren (Washington) to the United States Division. 23 February 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2479/9

Keren reports on Eban's meeting with Ohley of the State Department and Lovett of the Defense Department. Eban argued that the Middle East's strategic importance is not sufficiently appreciated in the United States. The Middle East is at the junction of three continents, and its ground contains the world's largest oil reserves. It should be given priority in the Western powers' defence plans, and Israel's role as a valuable factor in this array should be seriously considered. Israel has military manpower potential of 200,000 soldiers, as well as highly developed industrial production capabilities. Ohley, who related to Eban's comments sympathetically, asked for details on Israel's armaments requirements and the size of its standing army. Ohley then turned the conversation to the problem of Israel's refusal to allow the American attachés to inspect the military industries.[1] He explained

that he supported Israel's proposal to manufacture light weapons for the Allies, but to bring the matter up for resolution, additional details on the equipment available in Israel were necessary. In view of Israel's refusal, the necessary information was impossible to acquire.

Lovett wanted to know whether Israel had made up its mind to go hand-in-hand with the Western powers. The ambassador reminded him of the Prime Minister's declaration that Israel would defend its independence and democracy against any attack from without or within.[2]

Lovett addressed himself to a proposition made by Sharett to Marshall[3] to replace the I.D.F.'s 150,000 rifles with similar weapons of American manufacture. He asked how this request could be reconciled with Israel's proposal to manufacture light weapons. Eban replied that Israel's ordnance plants manufacture bullets and mortars up to six-inch calibre, but cannot produce rifles in such a quantity as to equip the entire army. He explained that Israel had bought anything available during the war and must standardize its equipment now. What Sharett had suggested to Marshall was to adjust the I.D.F.'s equipment to American formats.[4]

Notes

1. Cf. No. 55, n. 1.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 3.
3. See Vol. 5, Nos. 509–510.
4. Cf. report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 580–84.

74. Meeting: J. Herzog–T. McMahon[1] (Tel Aviv, 23 February 1951, document dated 25 February 1951)

Report: 130.10/2523/17

McMahon stressed that the Catholic Church had not backed down on the fundamental question of the internationalization of Jerusalem. The Partition Plan envisaged a three-way partition, and while the needs of both Jews and the Arabs had been met, the Christians were left without a real foothold in Palestine. McMahon objected to Herzog's assertion that New Jerusalem was holy neither to the Jews nor to the Christians, and argued that the concept of Jerusalem embraced this sector, too. Neither did he accept the claim that internationalization was impractical, citing evidence from other parts of the world. He again argued that an irrevocable international commitment to the Christian world had been made with respect to Jerusalem. As for

Israel-Vatican relations, McMahon stressed that the Vatican wants to differentiate completely between the issue of relations with the Christian denominations in Israel and the problem of Jerusalem. He expressed gratitude to the Israeli authorities for their treatment of the Christian denominations. Herzog noted the anti-Israel shift in the American Catholic press. McMahon, while acknowledging that Israel is extremely sensitive to the attitude of the Catholic press, drew attention to Blanshard's[3] articles in *The Nation* attacking the Vatican for manipulating certain U.N. debates. He insisted the charge was groundless. When Herzog asked what the *Nation* articles have to do with Israel, McMahon replied that someone was behind the recent attacks on the Vatican in the United States. He also noted comments by Eban that represented the Vatican as a "bogeyman"; this accusation was not favourably received by the centre of Catholicism and its worldwide periphery.

Herzog asked what was the meaning of the recurrent rumours of a Vatican *rapprochement* with the Arab League, and whether the promise of absolute Vatican neutrality on Near East affairs, given to Israel in 1949, was still viable. McMahon replied that if Azzam's[4] audience with the Pope was the basis for this apprehension, there was no reason for concern. Herzog made it clear that Israel's apprehension pertained not to the fact of Azzam's visit but to the articles that had appeared in its wake in *l'Osservatore Romano*. These articles view League policy too leniently, while striking an unfriendly tone towards Israel. McMahon replied that not everything appearing in *l'Osservatore Romano* automatically enjoys the Vatican's seal of approval. It must be determined whether these articles were written by the newspaper's editorial board or contributed by an outside political correspondent. MacMahon did, however, admit that there was movement in the direction of a *rapprochement* between the Vatican and the Arabs on the basis of the concept broached in 1950 by the Egyptian Minister to the Vatican, i.e., a Vatican-Islam defence alliance "against the materialist onslaught [that was] flooding" the world and deliberately infiltrating the Near East as well. According to McMahon, the Egyptian Minister to the Vatican was winning souls for the implementation of his ideas.

Notes

1. Thomas J. McMahon, an American clergyman. National Secretary of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association and head of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine.
2. See Vol. 5, Editorial Note, p. 698, and cf. Vol. 4, Editorial Note, pp. 638–39.
3. Paul Blanshard, journalist, *The Nation*'s representative in Rome during the Holy Year. He published a series of articles on the Vatican.

4. Azzam Pasha, Secretary-General of the Arab League.
5. Eugenio Cardinal Tisserant, Secretary of the Congregration for the Eastern Church in the Vatican.

75. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to W. Eytan. 26 February 1951

Memorandum: 130.02/2417/1

Pursuant to a previous meeting on questions relating to Germany,[1] in which it was decided to present the Great Powers with a note on the reparations, Avner expounds his position: only through direct contact with the Germans will it be possible to arrive at an agreement of substance. He bases himself on the following reasoning: (a) Because American policy aspires to introduce Germany quickly as a member with equal rights into the family of nations, it is unlikely that the Americans will exert pressure with respect to reparations and payments at this stage. Eisenhower's remark in Germany, to the effect that the past should be forgotten, is indicative of the direction in which the Americans are heading. Their response to Israel's latest missive[3] makes much the same point. The Americans are also about to give ground on the question of Germany's debts, even though they had previously made any change in the occupation regime contingent upon the Germans' admitting to the existence of these debts. (b) Neither should the British be expected to press Germany. Great Britain does object to rearming Germany, but has no objections to Germany's political resurrection. Lord Henderson[4] hinted as much to representatives of the World Jewish Congress. (c) Only the attitude of the French seemed encouraging, but one should not place great hopes on them either.

It seems that the Germans, of all people, are showing interest in reaching an accommodation with Israel and the Jewish people. For various reasons they evidently seek to expunge the stain that they bear. In Avner's opinion, Israel is liable to miss the opportunity if it postpones contact with the Germans for a protracted period. He suggests that the domestic decisions be delayed no longer and that Israel ready itself for this possibility. He believes that this stance can be explained to most of the parties in the Knesset, and that such a step would not seriously endanger the government.

As for the manner in which contact is to be made, Avner suggests considering Fischer's idea of beginning with a secret meeting where the Germans would be urged to issue a declaration condemning the crime against the Jewish people and promising reparations. After such a proclamation, the road will have been cleared for Israel to send a delegation for the purpose of practical negotiations.

Notes

1. The meeting took place on 21 February, and in its course a decision was taken to present the reparations letter to the Four Powers at the earliest opportunity.
2. Gen. Robertson. See Editorial Note, pp. 58–59, and Nos. 68, 69, 71, and 72.
3. See No. 19 and Editorial Note, pp. 16–17.
4. William W. Henderson, Joint Parliamentary Undersecretary of State, British Foreign Office.
5. Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Editorial Note

Conclusion of technical aid agreement between Israel and the U.S.A.

On 26 February, Israel and the United States signed a technical aid agreement under President Truman's Point Four Program of January 1949, concerning U.S. aid to underdeveloped areas. The agreement stipulated bilateral exchanges of information and experts. In its wake, Israel expected an allocation of $100,000 by the end of June, 1950. (The agreement is kept in File 130.02/2422/7.)

76. M. Sharett (Jerusalem) to E. Elath (London). 28 February 1951

Orig.: 93.04/36/14

Sharett conjectures about Robertson's impressions from his visit to Israel.[1] He hypothesizes that Robertson's report will sound something like this: (1) There is no doubt that Ben-Gurion and Sharett represent the dominant trend of thought in Israel: vigorous resistance to a Soviet takeover, and a tendency to consider Great Britain and the United States as allies. (2) Israel's army leaders were less frank, and almost certainly have more serious reservations concerning Great Britain. Nevertheless, there is no reason to doubt their psychological willingness to fight Soviet occupation, and in any event, there is no question that the government effectively controls the army. (3) Israel is going through an important process of *rapprochement* with Great Britain, but residual grudges and suspicions oblige the government to move slowly. Perhaps the government itself shares these grudges and suspicions. (4) The Prime Minister is a towering personality and a visionary. His ability to raise the conversation to a high level enables him to ignore questions of the moment and justify his failure to answer them. His personal candour, the genuineness of which cannot

be doubted, permits him more easily to refrain from making commitments in the government's name. (5) The visit failed to achieve its two purposes: a possible arrangement governing unrestricted air passage over Israel, and extracting an unequivocal promise that forces will be allowed to cross Israel in time of war. (6) Nevertheless, the visit should be considered not as a failure but rather as one link in a chain or one stage of a process. (7) Israel's tremendous latent spiritual power, its evident prowess in building and manufacturing, and above all its far-reaching recognition of its own value and its aspiration to independence, make it an unknown factor whose turns of policy cannot be foreseen. Efforts to achieve dialogue with Israel must continue.[2]

Notes

1. See Comay to Elath, 28 February 1951, 93.04/36/14; Editorial Note, pp. 58–59; and Nos. 68, 69, 71, and 72.
2. Cf. Robertson's impression of the visit in memorandum dated 1 March 1951 (attached to report of his visit to Israel, 13 March 1951, PRO, FO371/91240).

77. Meeting: E. Elath–E. Shinwell. 1 March 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 58–59; and Nos. 68, 69, 71, and 72.
2. Muhammad Salah al-Din, Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

78. A. Eban (Washington) to M. Sharett. 2 March 1951

Coded Tel. WIA734; Outg.: 93.01/2207/15

Eban reported that he was meeting individually with the sponsors of the bill for foreign aid to Israel.[1] His discussion with Taft focused on the concept of American security. Taft expressed apprehension that unless the bill mentioned the word "security" it would meet with vigorous criticism. He proposed that Congress be presented with the argument that the existence of an independent, democratic state prepared to defend itself and its form of government, and to avoid deteriorating into Communism, indirectly strengthens American security; Eban agreed to this approach. On the spot, Taft instructed his secretaries to inform other senators that he was ready to present the bill as it stood, and was inviting them to join him. Eban was to meet Douglas, the bill's second sponsor.[2] He sent off a draft text of the bill to Sharett that same day.[3]

Notes

1. The sponsors of the Israel foreign aid bill in Congress were Republican Senator Robert Taft, a friend of Abba Hillel Silver's, and Democrat Paul Douglas.
2. Paul Douglas. After the meeting, Eban reported by telegram that Douglas had approved the bill in the version previously discussed with Taft (W738, 2 March 1951, 93.01/2207/15).
3. See Information to Cabinet Members, No. 102, 19 March 1951, 130.20/2485/1.

79. A. Eban (Washington) to W. Eytan. 6 March 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2408/13

Pursuant to his correspondence with Eytan,[1] Eban seeks to make clear his viewpoint on two issues pertaining to Israeli-Jordanian relations: (a) Regarding compensation, Eban makes it clear that in his previous letter it was not his intention to replace the idea of compensation for the impoverished masses with compensation for property owners, but to pursue both ideas at once. Eban's recommendation that Israel offer compensation in addition to contributing to a general refugee resettlement fund was meant to soften opposition to a peace settlement among the Palestinians serving in Jordan's government. (b) Concerning the transfer of the Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem, Eban supports such a move before the next General Assembly meeting because the very fact that the Ministry remained in Tel Aviv would prompt a reopening of the question. It is also his impression that the British and American delegations to the U.N. are certain that Israel will behave thus. He suggests that the following deliberate policy be implemented in stages: (1) holding the talks with the American Ambassador and the British Minister in Jerusalem; (2) passing legislation to protect holy places under Israeli rule, and appointing a representative without public ceremony; (3) establishing a provisional Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem to which foreign envoys would occasionally be summoned even before technical arrangements for a permanent office are completed; (4) informing the diplomatic corps that the Ministry is about to move to Jerusalem and is willing to discuss with the envoys their plans to find housing, premises, etc.; (5) holding negotiations in various capitals in the spirit of this plan. Summing up, Eban recommended that the transfer be implemented step by step.[3]

Notes

1. See No. 12 and n. 3 *ibid.*

2. The second half of the sentence is omitted here.
3. Eban's approach was also supported by Kollek, who reminded Sharett of the internal political benefits that would ensue from the gradual transfer of the Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem. (See his letter to Sharett, 7 March 1951, 130.02/2414/4.)

80. G. Rafael (New York) to A. Eban (Washington). 7 March 1951

Orig.: 93.08/337/24

Rafael reports on his talk with Y. Malik, Soviet Minister to the U.N., concerning the Korean problem. Malik claimed the U.S. was not interested in ending the war, while Russia saw a need for its peaceful resolution. Malik asked if the U.N. delegations were still committed to negotiations on Korea, and Rafael answered that the Entezam Commission[1] was waiting for Peking to respond to its inquiry. He added that some delegations interpreted Stalin's comments as inviting renewed negotiations. In response to Malik's question on Israel's attitude to the deputy foreign ministers' talks in Paris on Germany, Rafael replied that Israel, too, was opposed to German rearmament, and told Malik of the Knesset's recent decision against rearming the two Germanies—a resolution forwarded to the General Secretary of the U.N. Malik evinced great interest in this matter, and asked to see the Knesset's resolution. Malik criticized American policy towards Germany, which, in his opinion, was liable to lead to a new war. Rafael expressed reservations as to Malik's assumption that the U.S. was preparing for war against the U.S.S.R., emphasizing in particular the stand taken by the American Jewish community against German rearmament. Malik argued that the masses have no say in America, and that Americans behave like spoiled children. He added that the U.S. had deluded itself into believing it would gain from another war, and that even its Jews could not grasp the atrocities perpetrated against their brethren in Europe. Rafael rejected this claim, noting the Jewish doctrine of mutual responsibility. He added that efforts must be made to end the Korean War in order to quell international tension. When asked if Israel had any solutions to offer, Rafael answered that an effort was being made to formulate new ideas suited to existing circumstances in Korea.

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 4–5.
2. Reference is to Stalin's remarks in a broadcast on Radio Moscow on 16 February

1951. Asked about the international situation by a reporter for the Soviet Communist Party organ *Pravda*, Stalin declared that "War is not inevitable at this juncture . . . but is liable to become inevitable". He attacked the United Nations for having become an American tool, and assailed the forces invading Korea. He reserved special calumny for the British Prime Minister for asserting in Parliament that the Soviet Union had not laid down its weapons after World War II, and accused Britain of not responding to the Soviet peace initiative. Stalin expressed confidence that the war in Korea would end with the invaders' defeat, and declared that the Soviet Union would continue to keep the peace and prevent war.

3. The resolution was adopted on 10 January 1951 (*Divrei ha-Knesset*, Third Session of First Knesset, Vol. VIII, p. 743).

81. S. Bendor[1]: Report on the visit of L. Jones in Israel (11–14 March 1951)[2]

130.20/2479/9

Jones and Davis met Sharett on 12 March, in the presence of Eytan, Bendor, and Shiloah. In the second part of the conversation the guests brought up the question of Communist influence on Israel: (a) possible infiltration by Soviet agents among the immigrants from Rumania; (b) infiltration via direct immigration from the Soviet Union, should there be any; (c) they inquired whether all immigrants were being well screened; (d) the source of funds of the Communist Party; (h) the composition of Mapam and how its members reconcile Zionism and Communism; (f) whether the Soviet Union has an intelligence network in Israel; and (g) whether the I.D.F.'s composition has changed; during the War of Independence it had had an element with a certain "coloration".

Jones asked whether the army exerted political influence and whether it was capable of reversing political decisions. Sharett stressed that the army is an instrument of the state.

That evening Jones and Davis met the Minister of Finance, in the presence of Horowitz and Bendor. They asked how those responsible for Israel's economy could direct it in view of the rising tide of immigration. They also asked about the condition of the Israel Pound and whether there was any chance of stabilizing it.

The Minister of Finance and Horowitz explained the causes of mass immigration to Israel and its impact on the economy. They said that the pressure of current conditions frustrated any possibility of regulating it. They noted the great progress made since Israel's establishment in agricultural development and other fields of economic endeavour, due in part to loans from the Export-Import Bank. Israel is doing everything possible to increase production for domestic consumption

in order to save foreign currency, but the pace of immigration makes this hard to achieve in the short run. The country needs time and money in order to get through the initial years of hardship.

They mentioned several latent possibilities: increasing citrus production, resuming work at the potash works, the discovery of phosphates in the Negev, attracting foreign capital, and other enterprises and plans. They expressed hope that United States financial aid would help balance the budget and rejected the possibility of devaluing the Israel Pound as long as the new rate of exchange could not be ensured.

On 14 March, L. Jones met the Prime Minister and the American Ambassador in Tiberias, wishing to hear Ben-Gurion's view of the regional situation. Ben-Gurion said that peace in the region depended upon Israel's achieving peace with Egypt. He added that there was no real controversy between Israel and Egypt; both were likely to benefit from resumption of social and commercial relations. He noted that the U.S. and Britain could promote peace by encouraging liberal forces in Egypt. Otherwise, there was danger that Egypt's corrupt regime would accelerate the spread of communism there.

L. Jones stated that during his visit to Egypt he became aware of the fact that no one there was paying attention to the issue of peace with Israel, being preoccupied with the withdrawal of British forces from the Canal Zone and with the union of Sudan and Egypt. No Egyptian statesman would dare propose peace with Israel as long as Egypt had not won at least a moral victory in its struggle against England. In his view, there was no prospect that the U.S. or Britain could prevail upon Egypt to make peace with Israel as long as Egypt's struggle with Britain continued.

Nor did Jones find any interest in peace with Israel in any other Arab country except Jordan. King Abdallah and the Jordanian Prime Minister desire peace, but their hands are tied by the Arabs west of the Jordan River, especially the property owners. Jones holds that Israel must make small concessions to Jordan in order to strengthen Al-Rifa'i. He mentioned, for example, releasing blocked assets, paying compensation for homes in Jerusalem's demilitarized zone that are destined for Israeli control, and establishing a free zone at Haifa Port. He expressed hope that such concessions would foster an atmosphere that would eventually bring peace. Davis added that releasing the blocked assets would put an end to the notion prevalent among the Arabs that Israel was on the verge of bankruptcy. Calling Jones's picture quite gloomy, Bendor expressed hope that the U.S. had considered working actively to change things at the upcoming Istanbul conference.

At this point, Ben-Gurion steered the discussion to the international situation and the prospects for peace. Jones suggested that if war

could be avoided for the next year and a half, the danger of a new world war might pass. Ben-Gurion noted that there was no way of knowing how willing the Western nations, excluding England, were to fight. In the Middle East, only Turkey and Israel are ready and willing. Yet Israel, unlike Turkey, is surrounded by enemies; hence, as long as peace eludes Israel, it will be unable to deploy forces for fear of Arab attack.

Jones said that in all his visits to Arab countries, he heard no hint of plans or preparations for a second round against Israel. Ben-Gurion said that such thinking exists, for example, among certain circles in Egypt, and even if this were not being considered now, there was no knowing what would happen if a world war broke out, for the Arabs were liable to take advantage of that situation to attack Israel. Therefore the U.S. must take an interest in peace between Israel and its neighbours so that in an emergency, it would be able to tap Israel's potential in manpower, industry, and other areas. Jones reassured Ben-Gurion that he and his colleagues were concerned about regional peace.

On 15 March, Bendor met Jones and Davis at Lydda Airport and discussed the presentation to Congress of a bill providing aid to Israel. Jones said approval would be difficult to attain; with the new American tax burden, Congressmen were seeking cutbacks, not additional spending. Neither would it be easy to pass a bill calling for aid to a single nation in this region. In every Arab state visited, there were complaints about favoritism to Israel, with special mention made of the $35 million loan.[4] A financial aid program could only succeed in a regional context.

Jones met Shiloah on 14 March and expressed pessimism as to the chances for peace in the region. He said that hatred for Israel was deeply seated in Egypt, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, that there was no trust in Israel's good intentions, and that the Arabs believed they had nothing to gain from peace with Israel. Arab statesmen are afraid to jeopardize their political standing and even their lives. Repeating what he had said to the Prime Minister, he said there was no chance for peace with Egypt; Arab states were apathetic about peace with Israel, had become accustomed to the present situation, and were awaiting Israel's economic collapse. He was very impressed by the ruler of Syria, who seemed to take his nation's plight to heart.

Jones said the Arabs were complaining about the American government's failure to assist them. He explained to Shiloah that the U.S. had refrained from proffering such assistance thus far because Arab regimes were inefficient and incapable of organizing public opinion in favor of the U.S. Yet, he continued, now the time has come to help them, and he asked if Israel would oppose this. Shiloah replied that if

America made aid to Israel conditional on aid to the Arabs, this would arouse resentment. Israel would oppose military aid to the Arabs, but not aid to raise their standard of living. As for the danger of world war, Jones explained that due to Arab enmity, Israel could not serve as a bridgehead for the West. Defending the region would require drawing up separate defence plans for Israel and the Arabs, and allocation of weapons to both sides. The question was whether to maintain parity between Israel and each individual Arab state, or between Israel and all states combined. Either way, one side would be short-changed.

Notes

1. Shmuel Bendor, Director of the U.S. Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. According to the report, Jones left the country on 15 March. The document was presumably written after that date.
3. The first part of the document, describing the first day of the visit, is omitted here.
4. See No. 45, n. 2.
5. See No. 5, n. 1.

82. G. Rafael (New York) to M. Sharett. 12 March 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2384/21

Replying to Sharett's telegram of 7 March,[1] Rafael summarizes the areas in which Israel's policy differs from or clashes with that of the U.S. In his view, the very fact of Israel's nonalignment with any political or military bloc affords it a broad measure of independence and manoeuvrability *vis-à-vis* East and West, and lends added weight to its views on controversial issues. Among the issues on which Israel's policy differs from that of the U.S., Rafael lists the following:

(1) Israel opposes conciliation towards Germany. America's support of German rearmament is contrary to the interests of Israel and the Jewish people. Israel has used the U.N. forum on every possible occasion to warn against such rearmament.

(2) Israel supports representation of the People's Republic of China in the U.N. It voted in favour of the resolution in this regard presented by India at the beginning of the Fifth General Assembly.

(3) Israel has spoken out and voted against ending the diplomatic boycott of Spain.

(4) Israel did not support the American plan for controlling atomic power.

(5) In elections to the Economic and Social Council Israel sup-

ported a Polish over an American candidate, and Poland won by a single vote.

(6) Israel voted in favour of the Soviet proposal regarding the admission of new members into the U.N.

(7) Israel opposed granting the General Secretary of the Arab League U.N. observer status.

(8) Israel abstained on the U.N.'s condemnation of Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria for refusing to fulfill their international obligations on human rights under the peace treaty.

(9) Israel voted against a decision empowering the "Little Assembly" to continue investigating charges by the Republic of China against the USSR.

(10) Israel abstained on the Eritrea resolution.

(11) In the discussions on the "Pact for strengthening the peace" resolution, Israel emphasized the need for peaceful resolution of international conflicts, and succeeded in inserting a special section in the proposal.

(12) Concerning Korea, on 4 October, Israel voted in favour of India's proposal to establish a committee to seek a compromise between the American and Soviet positions; an Israeli amendment was inserted in the proposal of 7 October. Israel expressed its reservations about Syngman Rhee's regime.[2] Israeli proposals served as the basis for the five principles which the First Committee adopted as a basis for the peaceful resolution of the Korean conflict.[3] Israel's proviso that a cease-fire in Korea precede comprehensive negotiations was accepted as a guiding principle and won Chinese support. Israel's initiative was contrary to the American intent of imposing immediate sanctions on Peking. Israel pursued a peaceful resolution of the conflict at a time when much of the American press and Congress were seeking military escalation; Israel received a secret memorandum on this topic on 4 January.[4]

Israel stood at the forefront of those nations opposing sanctions against Peking, and, on Israel's initiative, the paragraph on sanctions was stricken from the American proposal. Nonetheless, Israel still abstained when it was put to a vote.

Notes

1. 130.09/2338/14.
2. Syngman Rhee, President of the Republic of Korea (South Korea).
3. See Editorial Notes, pp. 4–5, 15.
4. See Lourie's telegram to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, X761, 5 January 1951, 93.01/2203/3.

83. M. Sasson [Tel Aviv] to R. Shiloah. 12 March 1951

Report: 130.02/2408/13

Sasson's reports on his meeting with Samir al-Rifa'i on 23 February 1951 at Shune, R. Shiloah in attendance. The meeting lasted several hours, interrupted only for a short supper, at which time King Abdallah's physician, Dr. Shaukat al-Saty, and Abd al-Ghani al-Karmi were present as well. Shiloah told of his last meeting with King Abdallah,[1] and expressed regret at al-Rifa'i's absence on that occasion. He emphasized that for Israel, the Jordanian government is both the King and the Prime Minister, and that Israel has no intention of acting in conjunction with either figure unless the other knows about it.

Al-Rifa'i responded by thanking Shiloah for his candour. He mentioned that he had read with satisfaction Shiloah's most recent letters to King Abdallah.[2] He nevertheless felt that Shiloah had exaggerated Jordan's role in resolving the Wadi Araba controversy,[3] and emphasized that Shiloah himself had contributed to its speedy resolution. Al-Rifa'i further blamed the entire misunderstanding on dishonest steps taken by Riley which had confused both parties.

Al-Rifa'i agreed with the summary decided upon by Shiloah and himself at their last meeting,[4] the main points of which were: (1) The Armistice Agreement stipulates certain mutual obligations which, for one reason or another, have not yet been implemented. Both sides agree that the terms must be fulfilled in their entirety. (2) In the absence of any possibility of achieving a formal peace treaty, both sides view complete implementation of the Agreement as an important step towards a comprehensive settlement. The paragraph in Article 8 allowing both sides to raise any problem for discussion in the Special Committee greatly facilitates progress towards such a settlement. (3) After solutions are agreed upon for the problems under discussion, a timetable will be worked out stipulating the various stages involved in their implementation, and specifying target dates. Al-Rifa'i again stressed that if the articles of the agreement were carried out generously enough to make them well received by the public, it would help both sides advance towards the achievement of their other important objectives.

Shiloah described the list of problems yet to be resolved: (1) Concerning Naharayim: Israel is prepared to hand over the disputed area to Jordan if means of retroactively implementing Article 8 of the Armistice Agreement can be agreed upon. Al-Rifa'i explained Jordan's conviction that the entire disputed area at Naharayim east of the Jordan River belongs to Jordan. He was satisfied with Shiloah's promise. (2) Regarding Article 6 of the Armistice Agreement, Shiloah said that

the money Israel was to pay Jordan for paving the Kalkilya-Tulkarm road was ready to be transferred, but since Abdallah al-Tal[5] left his job, there has been no one to claim it. The funds remain at Jordan's disposal. As for compensation to villagers who chose to leave the area that became part of Israel according to the Agreement, Shiloah made it clear that Israel agreed to admit the claims of a few such persons if they prove justified. He added that, as far as he knew, there were few such cases, and suggested that al-Rifa'i submit a list for review. Al-Rifa'i said that he took exception to Shiloah's interpretation of the Agreement, and considered the problem more far-reaching. He claimed that compensation was due not only to those few individuals who had abandoned their land, but also to those who had been cut off from their land when territory was turned over to Israel, even though the latter still lived in villages in Jordan. Al-Rifa'i agreed that Shiloah was right according to the literal wording of the Agreement, but asked Israel to broaden the interpretation to include the latter category. Shiloah agreed to consider this matter within the framework of the Special Committee after agreement was reached on implementation of Articles 6 and 8.

Al-Rifa'i said that regarding Article 8 one must distinguish between those articles advantageous to Israel and those advantageous to Jordan. Jordan's obligation to permit resumption of rail traffic to Jerusalem had already been fulfilled. As for the articles advantageous to Jordan, they had lost their practical value in the meantime. Jordan had already built a new road to Bethlehem and Jordan, and was uninterested in Israel's providing electricity to the Old City. At this stage, only Israel would derive benefit from implementing the Article (the road to Mt. Scopus and the Mount of Olives, and the opening of the Latrun road). Therefore, al-Rifa'i suggested that discussion on this point be expanded to include the entire Jerusalem question. He argued that an open-handed policy towards Jordan would prove to the public the mutual benefits of implementing the Article.

Shiloah warned against expanding the discussion as this was liable to complicate matters for both sides and bring about a deadlock in the talks. In reply, Al-Rifa'i said that he was willing to remain bound by the written Agreement; in this case, however, he would be compelled to interpret those articles favouring Israel quite narrowly. Ultimately both sides agreed to bring written suggestions for ways of implementing Article 8 to the next meeting.[6]

Notes

1. See No. 58 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. The letters were untraced.

3. See No. 70, n. 4.
4. See No. 13 and n. 1 *ibid.*
5. Abdallah al-Tal, formerly Military Governor of Arab-held Jerusalem.
6. The meeting was held on 16 March 1951. See Editorial Note, pp. 79–80.

Editorial Note

Note from the Government of Israel to the Allied Powers on Reparations from Germany—12 March 1951

Letters similar to this were concurrently forwarded to Washington, Paris, and the Soviet Legation in Tel Aviv. When delivering the letters, Israel's representatives were asked to emphasize verbally the following: (a) "Germany's moral obligation to offer reparations to the Jewish people for the suffering caused the Jews between 1933 and 1945"; (b) "Israel's status as the representative and trustee of the Jewish people with respect to reparations"; and (c) the proposals and demands in the last paragraph of the letter, "particularly in connection with the Four Power Convention" (Eytan to Israel missions, 5 March 1951, 130.02/2417/1). The letter was published the day after it was presented. Israel's representatives, and the coordinators of Jewish bodies worldwide, were asked to help make the letter a success through declarations, public announcements, etc. (The text of the letter [Main Volume, No. 84] is taken from Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 232, 7 March 1951, 130.10/2539/2.)

84. Note from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United Kingdom. 12 March 1951

Note

1. See No. 19.

Editorial Note

Israel's Request for an American Grant-in-Aid

The following note (No. 85) was completed on 15 March 1951, brought to the attention of State Department officials on 16 March (see No. 86), and presented to the Secretary of State by A. Eban and D. Horowitz in a special meeting on 22 March. See report of meeting in No. 90.

85. Note from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 15 March 1951

Editorial Note

Meeting between R. Shiloah and S. al-Rifa'i—16 March 1951

Under the agreement reached at the meeting on 23 February 1951 (No. 83), Shiloah and Rifa'i met again on 16 March to continue the discussion on normalizing Jordan-Israel relations. Rifa'i presented a document with the following three-point Jordanian plan for resolving outstanding issues: (1) Israel would evacuate Naharayim and the armistice line would be the international border; (2) after the evacuation, but not before at least a month had passed, the parties would continue implementing Articles 6 and 8 of the Armistice Agreement; (3) the Special Committee would take up questions in need of clarification, in the following order:

Article 6: Implementation of Paragraph 6 of that Article, *viz.*, allowing villagers with land across the Israeli line access to their plots in order to harvest their crops.

Article 8: (1) Free passageway on the Latrun highway, and agreement on the partition of the no-man's-land in the Latrun area between Israel and Jordan; (2) cessation of U.N. supervision of the Mt. Scopus enclave and transfer to Jordan of responsibility for its defence; Israeli institutions on Mt. Scopus would function and have free access under Jordanian supervision; (3) unrestricted access to the Holy Places and permission to use the cemetery on the Mount of Olives; the Special Committee would determine the access arrangements; (4) re-activation of the Latrun pumping station; (5) re-activation of the railway to Jerusalem (already implemented); (6) Jordan would withdraw its demand to open the Bethlehem road and supply electrical power to the Old City.

Partitioning of no-man's-land: No-man's-land should be partitioned on the basis of ownership of the property and requirements of the area.

Compensation for Arab property in Jewish Jerusalem: Israel will offer compensation for Arab property in Jewish Jerusalem, and the Jordanians for Jewish property in their sector.

Release of blocked deposits: Israel will release blocked Arab deposits in Israeli banks.

Shiloah responded to Rifa'i's proposals at once, but forwarded Israel's official response only a month later (No. 132). He reported on

the conversation to the American Ambassador and the British Minister in Israel. No Israeli report on the talk has been found; its details are based on these reports. (See *FRUS,* 1951, V, pp. 601–604; Helm to British Foreign Office, 19 March 1951, Kirkbride to British Foreign Office, 19 March 1951, 31 March 1951, PRO, FO371/91364.)

86. E. Herlitz to the United States Division (Telegram). 16 March 1951

Notes

1. See No. 85.
2. Samuel J. Gorlitz, Assistant Chief for Public Loans, Investment and Economic Development Staff, Department of State.
3. See No. 78 and n. 1 *ibid.*
4. Cf. No. 90.

Editorial Note

The Hula Dispute

The protracted dispute between Israel and Syria over the Hula drainage project began in early 1951 when excavation work started on the west bank of the Jordan, south of the B'not Ya'aqov Bridge. On 27 January, the Syrians lodged a complaint with the Mixed Armistice Commission concerning work on Arab-owned land in the demilitarized zone. During the following month, the Syrians adopted a more aggressive attitude and demanded that Israel stop work forthwith. They argued that the removal of a natural obstacle on the Israel-Syria border altered the military balance between the two countries and violated Article 2 of the Armistice Agreement; they also claimed that the presence of workers who were not permanent residents of the demilitarized zone was contrary to Article 5 of the Agreement. Israel categorically rejected the Syrian claims and insisted on its right under Article 5 to reinstate civilian life in the demilitarized zone and maintain full sovereignty over the area. Israel opposed the cessation of work, but hinted at the possibility of compensating Arab landowners for their properties. By mututal consent, the issue was presented to Riley for his consideration. On 5 March, Riley rejected the Syrian argument that Israel had upset the military balance, but accepted the claim that lands in the demilitarized zone should not be expropriated, and that work should cease until the issue was resolved between

Israel and Syria. (See Middle East Division to Minister's Bureau, 25 February 1951; Riley to Chairman of Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission, 5 March 1951, 130.02/2433/5; Bendor to Israel Embassy in Washington, 26 March 1951, 93.03.3008/3.)

87. E. Herlitz to the United States Division (Telegram). 16 March 1951

Notes

1. On 15 March a shooting incident took place in the demilitarized zone between local Arabs, who attempted to prevent the transfer of equipment to the east bank of the Jordan, and Israeli forces stationed in the zone. Following the incident, the U.N. representative demanded that work cease. Israel did not respond, and the work continued as usual.
2. See Editorial Note above.
3. Meeting with Shiloah and Makleff on 14 March 1951, Riley agreed to propose the following solution to the Chairman of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission:
   (a) The Chairman of the Commission would delete the Hula problem from the Commission's agenda as being beyond its competence;
   (b) Israel would authorize the Chairman to handle the issue of landowners' compensation;
   (c) Since Israel had begun work without arranging this in advance with the Chairman of the Commission, it would cease work for several days and resume with the Chairman's consent. (Eytan's telegram to Eban, 14 March 1951, 130.02/2440/10)
4. Lt. Col. Shaul Ramati, General Staff Officer in charge of Israel Delegations to the Mixed Armistice Commissions during 1951.
5. Ramati participated in the aforementioned meeting of the Armistice Commission. During the meeting, Commission Chairman Col. Bossavy demanded that responsibility for handling the dispute be entrusted to him, and that the work cease until he ruled on landowners' compensation and continuation of the work (Israel agreed to stop the work from 16 to 23 March). The Syrians conditioned their agreement on an Israeli undertaking to accept in advance Bossavy's decision. Israel rejected the Syrian demand and refused to cease work beyond the date it had undertaken. The Israeli representative threatened to leave the meeting, and the Syrians eventually came around to the Israeli position. (See Middle East Division to Heads of Divisions, 20 March 1951; and Eytan's telegram to the Embassy in Washington, 22 March 1951, 130.02/2433/5.)

Editorial Note

Statement by the Foreign Minister in the Knesset on the Situation of Iraqi Jews

On 19 March, Sharett apprised the Knesset of the government's

response to the Iraqi Parliament's decision to block the assets of Iraqi emigrants: "The government of Israel . . . views this incident of robbery in the guise of law as a continuation of the oppressive and malicious governance traditionally practiced by Iraq towards its defenceless and helpless minorities". . . . The government resolved "to appeal through diplomatic channels to the Powers that have friendly relations with the government of Iraq, and to apprise them of the gravity of the situation and the dangers intrinsic to it." The government also decided to inform U.N. institutions and to declare publicly that "the value of the blocked Jewish assets in Iraq" would be taken into account when reckoning the compensation Israel had undertaken to pay Arabs who had abandoned their property in Israel (*Divrei ha-Knesset*, Third Session of First Knesset, VIII, pp. 1358–59).

On 20 March, in accordance with the government's resolution, Sharett presented this letter to U.S. Ambassador M. B. Davis and British Minister to Israel A. K. Helm. (See report on talk with M. B. Davis, 26 March 1951, 93.03/3043/7; see also No. 97.)

88. *Aide-Memoire* from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 20 March 1951

Editorial Note

Western Powers' Reply to Israel's Note on Reparations from Germany

What follows is the reply of the United States Government to Israel's letter to the Four Powers, dated 16 January 1951 (No. 19). Similar letters were received from Great Britain (20 March 1951) and France (24 March). The answers were not publicized, but were brought to the attention of Israel's overseas missions. (See Information to the Israel Missions Abroad, No. 261, 17 April 1951, 93.03/3063/18.)

89. Note from the Government of the United States to the Government of Israel. 21 March 1951

Note

1. See No. 19, and Editorial Note, pp. 16–17.

90. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 22 March 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 78, and No. 85.
2. See No. 84.
3. See No. 88.
4. Cf. report on talk in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 605–607.

91. Y. Shimoni: Diary Note [Tel Aviv]. 23 March 1951

Copy: 130.02/2385/30

Shimoni summarizes a meeting with Sharett, Eytan, E. Sasson and H. Raday regarding establishment of a diplomatic mission in India:

The Foreign Minister said Israel should not act too hastily to establish a mission in India, but preferably await a corresponding gesture from the Indians. Nehru's opposition is the chief impediment to closer ties. Sharett described his talks with Keskar[1] and Mrs. Pandit, from which he concluded that the Indians have serious reservations about establishing ties with Israel. In Elath's talk with Nehru, too,[2] the latter hinted that Israel must wait patiently for the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Shimoni expressed the opposing view that a legation must be established without waiting for full reciprocity. The delay in India is due not to political considerations but to budgetary difficulties and the lack of trained diplomats. Many European and Middle Eastern countries have no Indian delegation. Israel has greater interests in India than India does in Israel, and there is no reason to hesitate.

Shimoni added several other reasons for establishing a legation:

(1) Numerous consular matters are being neglected due to the situation.

(2) A mission in India could serve as a nucleus for Israeli representation in Southeast Asia.

(3) The Israeli public does not understand the government's hesitation and will greet establishment of a legation with full approval.

(4) Jewish and Zionist considerations warrant its establishment.

Shimoni suggested that if, despite everything, it was decided not to establish a legation, a chargé d'affaires should be appointed to represent Israel, and it should be made clear to India that establishing a legation depended upon a reciprocal gesture on her part.

Sasson lent his support to Shimoni's stand. Raday proposed the establishment of a consulate at Bombay, unlinked to the establish-

ment of the legation, and Sharett agreed. In the absence of reciprocity, Eytan rejected the idea of appointing a chargé d'affaires until reciprocity was achieved, and proposed that a candidate of stature be sought for the position of Minister to New Delhi, who should assemble a legation staff before officially approaching India. This proposal was accepted.

Notes

1. Balkrishne Keskar, Indian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; participated in Fifth U.N. Assembly.
2. See No. 20.
3. The first part of the sentence is unclear in the original.

92. Z. Argaman (Moscow) to G. Meron and A. Levavi. 23 March 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2325/6

Argaman, reporting on his talk with the Soviet Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, says that (1) the Soviet foreign office is unable to agree in principle to commercial exchanges without a trade agreement between the two countries;[1] (2) in the absence of an agreement, concrete proposals should be presented to the appropriate departments concerning the type and quality of goods, prices, etc.; (3) of the goods offered by Israel, the Soviet Union is interested neither in shoes nor in false teeth, but in synthetic resin, raw leather and wool; (4) the fact that Israel's requests to buy wheat, rye and wood were rejected does not mean that the Soviet Union is uninterested in trading with Israel. The most likely explanation is that the appropriate departments will not have an inventory large enough to warrant it. The Deputy Minister assured Argaman that the Soviet Union is interested in trade with Israel.

Note

1. Levavi instructed Argaman to sound out the Russians on whether they would agree to exchanges of goods, but not to persist with talks on a trade agreement. (Telegram PI482, 15 February 1951, 130.09/2325/5)

93. S. Bendor [Tel Aviv] to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations (New York). 25 March 1951

Copy: 93.03/3043/17

Bendor transmits a copy of the cable that arrived from Iraq on 20 March 1951: (1) Sharett's announcement in the Knesset[1] gave strength and comfort to Iraq's Jews, and also met with a favourable reaction among the Arabs. (2) Notables of the Jewish community are making efforts to persuade the Custodian to be lenient in the liquidation of businesses. (3) News of the Israel government's decision was published in two Iraqi newspapers. In the meantime, it has become known that Iraq is about to permit small shopkeepers to sell off their inventory, and those emigrating to Israel — to sell their household effects. (4) Most recent immigrants to Israel who arrived by plane left furniture in their homes, or left locked stores with merchandise; it is believed that this will also be the case with the coming flights.

Note

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 81–82.

94. A. Eban (Washington) to the United States Division. 26 March 1951

Orig. 130.20/2487/4

Eban, after meeting with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brannan,[1] reports that the Secretary displayed keen interest in the matters under discussion:

(1) Operation Stockpiling — The discussion centred around Eban's letter to Brannan,[3] proposing wheat exports to Israel of a limited scope, based on one year's consumption, with convenient terms of payment. Brannan and his aides do not doubt the proposal's feasibility, but are uncertain whether the wheat should remain U.S. property until paid for in full and how the American authorities would ensure efficient storage and necessary supervision. Likewise, the question arose of how to insure the American government against financial loss if international wheat prices should drop. Eban believes these problems can be solved, and requests the guidance of the Israeli Minister of Agriculture.

(2) Export licences — Brannan committed himself to authorizing grain transports to Israel: more than 18,000 tons of wheat and 9,000 tons of fodder.

(3) The wheat contract—The U.S. will support Israel's request for a higher quota under the International Wheat Agreement. Eban assumes action in this matter is centred in London.

Notes

1. On 21 March 1951.
2. Yehuda Lowe, Agricultural Attaché at the Israel Embassy in Washington; see Lowe to the United States Division, 22 March 1951, 130.20/2487/4.
3. See No. 24.
4. See No. 7.

Editorial Note

Further Developments in the Hula Dispute

As work was about to resume in the demilitarized zone on 23 March (see Editorial Note, pp. 80–81, and No. 87), the Chairman of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission informed Israel that the investigation concerning the drainage works had not yet been completed, and that until it was, work must not resume. He made it clear that any unilateral action in the zone was tantamount to a violation of the Armistice Agreement. Following this notification, a meeting was arranged upon Israel's initiative between the U.N. officials and the Deputy Chief of Staff, at which Makleff declared that Israel considered the demilitarized zone Israeli territory in every respect. The U.N. officials rejected this position and proposed a high-level Israeli-Syrian meeting. The reclamation work resumed on 25 March, but only on the west side of the Jordan. It was accompanied by an exchange of fire, which ceased when U.N. observers intervened. U.N. representatives again demanded that Israel stop work at once, but to no avail. On that very day, the Israeli and Syrian delegations met unofficially and decided to arrange a meeting between their respective Deputy Chiefs of Staff. The following document provides a summary of the meeting. (See M. Sasson to Director General's Bureau, 26 March 1951, 130.02/2433/5.) See also No. 98 and n. 1 *ibid.*

95. S. Divon (Tel Aviv) to A. Eban (Washington). 29 March 1951

Coded Tel. IWA321; Outg.: 130.09/2308/21

Divon summarizes the Makleff-Shishakli[1] discussion of 26 March: (1) The Syrian position—The Syrians demand that work on draining the Hula Valley cease and that all disagreements be handled by the chairman of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission. They commit themselves to abide by all of his instructions and decisions. (2) The Israeli position—It was agreed that the chairman will act in accordance with the authority granted him by Article 5 of the Armistice Agreement; that the question of compensation will be submitted to him for arbitration, and that if no agreement is reached, his decision will be final. Israel is unwilling to accept his instructions regarding cessation of work. (3) The U.N. position—Bossavy[2] indicated that he had not succeeded in achieving any agreement between the two sides. He is prepared to continue efforts, demands an immediate end to the work, and is considering Israel's right to commence work. The Israeli representatives informed Shishakli of Israel's willingness to open peace talks. He responded that he was unauthorized to discuss it, but would forward the matter to his government. To Ramati's question as to the conditions under which the Syrians would allow work to continue, Shishakli answered that if Israel stopped work immediately, an authorized person would be appointed to discuss with Israel the elimination, through partition, of demilitarized zones.

Notes

1. Colonel Adib Shishakli, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Syrian Army.
2. Georges Bossavy, Colonel in the French Army; Chairman of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission from March 1951.
3. See No. 100.
4. Bennett De Ridder, Colonel in the Belgian Army; Deputy and sometime Acting Chief of Staff, U.N. Truce Supervision Organization for Palestine (UNTSO).

96. S. Divon [Tel Aviv] to R. Shiloah. 29 March 1951

Copy: 130.13/2582/4

Pursuant to an earlier discussion, Divon sets out his thoughts on the possibility of a settlement with Egypt. He begins by summarizing the conventional assumptions:

(1) Influential Egyptian circles consider Israeli expansionism an inescapable reality, and therefore view an armed struggle between Israel and the Arabs as an unavoidable development for which preparations must be made with all seriousness.

(2) Egypt has no vital, pressing interest in reaching a settlement with Israel.

(3) At this stage, Egyptian leaders, who also lead the Arab League, have an interest in maintaining the officially accepted Arab stance as regards the Palestine problem.

(4) Despite all the above, there are individuals and small groups in Egypt who consider it useful to face facts and end the conflict.

According to Divon, these assumptions must be examined through direct contacts with Egyptian diplomats in Europe, resumption of contacts with certain Egyptians, creation of new ties, and preparation of a plan to utilize both Western and Arab parties in an "Operation Egypt". Divon holds that such an operation could produce worthwhile side effects, such as:

(1) Refuting the view widely in vogue among the Arabs, especially in Egypt, that Israel is Abdallah's ally.

(2) Creating the impression that Israel pursues a policy of nonalignment with conflicting forces in the Arab world, and that a pro-Egyptian tendency is forming to counterbalance the pro-Jordanian one.

(3) Establishing the fact that Israel is making efforts for peace.

(4) Increasing pressure on Jordan and giving Israel another trump card for negotiations.

(5) Accustoming the Arab world to the idea that negotiations between Israel and Egypt are possible.

(6) Broadening contacts with the Arab world.

97. W. Eytan to E. Palmer. 29 March 1951

Note

1. Paragraphs 2–4, describing the latest events in Iraq and corresponding to the first five paragraphs of No. 88, are omitted here.

98. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 30 March 1951

Notes

1. The shooting incidents in the demilitarized zone, which began when work resumed on 25 March (see Editorial Note, p. 86), escalated during the next two days. On 27

March one of the Israeli workers was wounded in an exchange of fire, and Israel fired mortars at the Syrian positions in retaliation for shooting from Syrian posts.

2. John R. Barrow, an official in the Office of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State.
3. In an exchange of letters on 14 March, the two agreed that a moratorium on drainage work would be in effect from 18 to 24 March (130.02/2433/5). The dates were changed to 16–23 March in correspondence on 15 March between Shoham and Bossavy. (Eytan's telegram to the Israel Embassy in Washington, 22 March 1951, *ibid.*)
4. See Nos. 81 and 99.
5. Cf. report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 611–612.

99. S. Bendor: Report on the Visit of G. C. McGhee in Israel (27–28 March 1951, document dated 1 April 1951)

130.20/2475/1

Sharett received McGhee in his office in Jerusalem on 27 March; the U.S. ambassador and Bendor were also present. Sharett informed them about developments in *aliya* from Iraq and Rumania and answered McGhee's questions. Most of the conversation concerned relations with the Arab states. Sharett reported on secret contacts with Jordan[4] which had not borne fruit thus far. King Abdallah wants to arrive at an arrangement but cannot sway his cabinet. The British have recently stepped up their pressure for a settlement. McGhee brought up the issue of villagers in the Triangle who had been cut off from their lands. Sharett said that Israel was prepared to compensate the villagers for the land, but he rejected a proposal that they be allowed to continue working it. Sharett said he was not at all confident that the Jordanian Prime Minister wanted peace. McGhee replied that he seemed sincere; he merely wanted to make sure that if he fulfilled Article 8 of the Armistice Agreement, Israel would also carry out its commitments. McGhee added that Rifa'i considered Mt. Scopus part of Jordan. Sharett rejected this presumption, adding that Rifa'i had recently presented him with his proposals for a settlement, which were being studied in Israel. McGhee expressed the hope that negotiations with Jordan would progress. Sharett answered that Israel accorded highest priority to reaching a settlement with Egypt, and was negotiating with Jordan only because this was the line of least resistance. McGhee said that the Arab nations believed that it was useless to negotiate with Israel because Israel was not prepared to make concessions. When Sharett argued against making concessions to those who had attacked Israel, McGhee made it clear that there

could be no negotiations without reciprocal concessions. Sharett said that Israel was prepared to provide compensation and discuss giving Jordan access to Haifa port. McGhee advised Israel to be liberal with respect to the blocked deposits. In reply, Sharett noted that Israel had been prepared to discuss the entire issue of compensation until the Iraqi matter came along, forcing Israel to announce that it would link the Iraqi Jews' blocked assets with deliberations on compensating the Arabs.[5] McGhee reported that the Arabs claimed exactly the opposite: it was Israel's attitude towards Arab property that forced them to adopt such measures. Sharett said that the *status quo* would prevail as long as no settlement was reached, and that the Arabs would come to their senses if they saw that the United States was helping Israel. McGhee reported that the Three Powers' declaration, securing both Arabs and Jews against aggression, had been reaffirmed in Istanbul.[6] He added that Jordan was apprehensive about negotiating with Israel in view of the unhappy outcome of the armistice talks. The United States could do nothing to bring peace nearer, McGhee said. Sharett stressed the importance of financing the rehabilitation of the refugees. He hoped Israel would be able to fulfill its commitments if it received direct aid from the United States and reparations from Germany. McGhee asked whether Israel believed it would receive reparations. Sharett replied that the family of civilized nations could hardly re-admit Germany unless the latter compensated [the victims of] its past crimes.

On 27 March, McGhee met the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem. McGhee said that the United States wanted peace between Israel and the Arab countries. Ben-Gurion responded that Egypt held the key to peace and asked how McGhee viewed the prospects of its coming to pass. Throughout his travels in the Arab states, McGhee said in response, he had found no proclivity to make peace. He agreed with Ben-Gurion's remarks, but said the United States could not force peace on Egypt. To Ben-Gurion's claim that peace would ensue once the Arabs accepted Israel's presence in the area, McGhee answered that they *had* come to terms with Israel's existence, and that no country would attack it. He repeated that he had observed no Egyptian willingness to arrive at a peace agreement with Israel, even when Bunche spoke with Salah a-Din.[8]

At a later stage of the conversation, McGhee asked about the outcome of talks with Gen. Robertson.[9] Ben-Gurion answered that they had been friendly if not entirely satisfactory. Britain regards Israel more as a land bridge rather than as an effective military entity. McGhee asked if Israel's resolve to resist Russian aggression was subject to doubt. Ben-Gurion said it was impossible to attribute such

resolve to the whole nation. Some ten percent would oppose war with Russia, and some eight percent would oppose helping Britain. Yet the majority's resolve was firm. McGhee inquired into Israel's economic and industrial situation. The Foreign Minister answered that production was experiencing difficulty in keeping up with immigration. The population had grown by 80 percent and production by only 50 percent. The Prime Minister said that in view of security needs, Israel was hoping to develop its chemical and metallurgical industries. Replying to a question by McGhee, he said he believed that if peace came, Israel could achieve economic independence within five to six years. McGhee wished to know how immigration affected Israel's economy. Ben-Gurion explained that immigration was vitally necessary, and that fears that it would lower living standards had proved groundless. Indeed, the immigrants had shown themselves to be a productive force. He went on to explain that immigration strengthened the security of Israel, which is like an island in a sea of Arab countries. Ben-Gurion believes Israel can sustain a population of four to five million, but must first develop its food production capacity. He re-emphasized that peace was a prerequisite for Israel's continued development. McGhee said that his country would be pleased if Israel were to reach a peace agreement, but he could not see how this could be done.

Notes

1. The first page of the document, dealing with arrangements for McGhee's visit, is omitted here.
2. The Prime Minister of Iran, Ali Razmara, was assassinated on 7 March by an extremist religious terror organization for having opposed the nationalization of Iran's oil.
3. See No. 60, n. 1.
4. See No. 83.
5. See Editorial Note, pp. 81–82, and No. 97.
6. See No. 45, n. 2, and Vol. 5, No. 249.
7. See No. 81.
8. See Vol. 5, No. 480.
9. See Editorial Note, pp. 58–59, and Nos. 68, 69, 71 and 72.

100. G. Avner to the Israel Embassy in Washington (Telegram). 1 April 1951

Notes

1. In the Hula project. See Editorial Notes, pp. 80–81 and 86, and No. 95.

2. U.N. document, 21 March 1951. The letter includes Riley's report, sent to the U.N. Secretary-General on 12 March 1951, on the Armistice Commissions' activities between November 1950 and February 1951. Attached to the account of some activities of the Israel-Syria Commission is Riley's opinion as expressed in his memorandum of 5 March, cited in Editorial Note, pp. 80–81. (See *SCOR, Sixth Year, Supplement for 1 April–30 June 1951*, pp. 11–22.)
3. In the Israel-Syria Armistice Agreement (Vol. 3, Appendix J).
4. At this time Syria lodged two complaints with the Security Council with respect to the Hula dispute: one on 29 January (U.N. Document S/2061) and the other on 29 March (U.N. Document S/2065). See *SCOR, Sixth Year, Supplement for 1 April–30 June 1951*, pp. 22–24.

101. B. Niv[1] (Warsaw) to A. Levavi. 1 April 1951

Copy: 130.11/2502/11

Niv reports on his meeting with the director of the Polish Foreign Ministry, at which he explained Israel's interest in continued *aliya* from Poland and sought to ascertain when and how such emigration might continue. His interlocutor took exception to the question, asserting that Poland was not interested in official negotiations on the emigration of Polish nationals and defining their present conversation as "private". Emigration had come to an end, he stated, and his government had no intention of renewing it. Reports had reached Poland of the harsh conditions in Israel and of the many emigrants who wished to return to Poland. Poland would never readmit them. He denied the existence of a problem of divided families, claiming that the families had chosen to split up of their own accord. Niv countered these arguments, and also raised the issue of orphans whose relatives in Israel insisted on adopting them. The possibility of establishing a Polish legation in Israel was mentioned at a later stage of the conversation. The Poles had rejected the proposal on the grounds that there was no suitable candidate for the post.

Niv concludes that in view of what was said, one cannot expect a massive exodus from Poland. Perhaps exit visas will be granted to the aged, the sick, etc. He suggests that a protest movement by relatives of Polish Jews be organized in Israel to create the greatest possible agitation.

Note

1. Baruch Niv, Chargé d'Affaires *a.i.* at the Israel Legation in Poland until August 1951 and subsequently in Rumania.

102. A. Biran (Jerusalem) to M. Sharett. 2 April 1951

Copy: 130.16/2948/7

Biran reports on talks with Ahmed Khalil, Jordan's representative on the special Israel-Jordan committee, on the prospects of peace between the two countries. (a) Khalil contended that Rifa'i wishes to reach an agreement with Israel but that he distrusts the Israelis. He believes it necessary to encourage him before the talks resume. To this end, he proposes that Jordanian ministers who view the talks favourably insist that Rifa'i come to terms. To prepare them for this, Khalil suggested that they meet Israeli ministers. (b) Khalil presented several Jordanian demands which, if acceded to, might further the talks: (1) changes in the armistice line between Tulkarm and Kalkilya, leaving Israeli settlements established in the area untouched; (2) a generous adjustment on the part of Israel in the Hebron area; (3) the possibility of passage between Hebron and Gaza, with visas or travel permits; (4) the possibility of passage to Bethlehem from Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem; this would entail the cession of territories in Abu Tur, the Arab College, the High Commissioner's residence, etc.; (5) repatriation of 15,000–20,000 property-owning refugees; (6) compensation for such refugees as will not return; (7) division of territory at Latrun, with Israel getting the road and the waterworks, and the Arabs the farmland. (c) Biran asked what Israel stands to gain in return for all these concessions; Khalil replied that Jordan deserves them all for breaking the united front of Arab countries and signing a peace treaty with Israel. Biran disagreed with Khalil's last remarks. He presented several Israeli claims concerning Jerusalem, but found the answers unsatisfactory. Biran believes the only issue that can be solved is Latrun, and adds that this is worth trying. He also suggests to Sharett that Khalil's proposal for a meeting of ministers be considered.

Notes

1. See No. 83.
2. Pablo de Azcárate, Principal Secretary of the Conciliation Commission.

103. United States Division (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 2 April 1951

Coded Tel. IWA 340; Outg.: 130.09/2308/21

The Chief of the General Staff, Shiloah, and others met Rajasooria,[1]

Metz,[2] and Bossavy on 1 April. The U.N. officials claimed that Israel had introduced paramilitary units and support arms into the demilitarized zone; that Israel was obstructing the observers' activities; that the removal of Arabs from the area was prejudicial to the restoration of normal civilian life; and that Israel was refusing to participate in meetings of the Armistice Commission. In view of all these, there was no point in the continued existence of the Armistice Commission and they would probably ask the Security Council to abolish it.

The Israeli representatives rejected the U.N. officials' claims. They argued that neither prohibited military units nor arms had been introduced into the area, that the Arabs had left of their own volition, and that Israel was willing to participate in the Commission if it deliberated military rather than civilian affairs, which were to be discussed with the Commission chairman only.

The Commission is scheduled to meet on 3 April. The Syrians undertook not to open fire from their territory and to prevent the entry of armed persons into the demilitarized zone from Syria. The drainage work will probably resume on that day.[3]

Notes

1. Jeffrey P. Rajasooria, Political Adviser to the Chief of Staff, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.
2. Colonel A. F. Metz. Served alternately as chairman of the Israel-Jordan and Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commissions.
3. At the meeting of 3 April Rajasooria presented a draft arrangement acceptable to the Syrians to solve the Hula dispute. Its provisions: (a) a general condemnation of the incidents in the area; (b) restoration of ordinary civilian life; (c) return to the zone of its Arab residents; (d) negotiations between Syria and Israel, to be completed by 3 May; (e) a moratorium on reclamation work until 3 May; (f) resumption of work on 3 May even if no agreement was reached by this date.

104. S. Eliashiv (Prague) to A. Levavi. 2 April 1951

Coded Tel. P38; Inc.: 130.09/2342/16

Eliashiv reports on a talk with Široký, who asserted that his government did not intend to set a limit on the total number of emigrants. Applications will be considered individually and positively. No difficulties will be created, and there will be no procrastination in the issuance of exit certificates. He was especially amenable to the emigration of members of divided families, Zionist activists, and legation employees. The authorities will also view favourably applications by

young people with no relatives in Czechoslovakia. Eliashiv and Široký agreed that the legation would present a list and that persons not appearing on it would apply directly and independently to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Eliashiv requests that these matters not be given publicity and writes that he intends to draft a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs during the next few days confirming the content of the interview.

Note

1. Jan Chalupa.

105. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 5 April 1951

Notes

1. A foreign aid bill to Israel was presented to Congress on 2 April.
2. See also A. Feinberg, report on conversation with the President, 4 April 1951, 130.20/2464/1. Feinberg met the President again on 13 April. The President reiterated that he did not want to see the aid bill fail in Congress, but also wished to refrain from intervening for the time being. (See Kollek's telegram to the United States Division, W926, 14 April 1951, 93.01/2207/16.) See also No. 134.
4. See A. Feinberg, report on conversation with the Secretary of State, 5 April 1951, 130.20/2485/1; cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 619–20.

106. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 5 April 1951

Notes

1. See No. 105.
2. In another telegram, Eban explained again that, after consulting with friends, he still believed that Feinberg's talks should not affect Israeli efforts to obtain a foreign aid bill (Eban's telegram to Sharett, W876, 5 April 1951, 93.01/2207/16).

Editorial Note

Government Discussion of a Retaliatory Action following the al-Hamma Incident

In the telegram, Eytan lists four resolutions adopted by the Govern-

ment on 5 April. Not all the ministers participated: Sharett was ill, and Geri, Joseph, Meyerson, and Shapira were abroad. Participating were the Chief of General Staff, Yigael Yadin, and his deputy, Mordecai Makleff. The latter reported on the al-Hamma incident (No. 108).

Apart from the proposals mentioned in the telegram, Ben-Gurion presented an additional proposal for action, which had been suggested by the Foreign Ministry: a military force would enter the demilitarized zone the next day to "check and search" the area and induce a retreat of the Syrian forces, which, the I.D.F. believed, were in the area. The U.N. forces would be apprised of the operation in advance. The ministers rejected this proposal and supported the reprisal and punitive action as originally suggested by Ben-Gurion. Minister Rosen supported the action but questioned the need to destroy the villages. Minister Lavon sought to instruct the I.D.F. forces not to harm women and children during the action. Ben-Gurion and the chief of staff explained that while everything would be done to prevent injury to women and children, no one could issue such an order in advance. Acceding to Ben-Gurion's request that the Government not explicitly decide on any particular measure, the Government authorized him to issue orders to the chief of staff.

107. W. Eytan to A. Eban and G. Rafael (Telegram). 5 April 1951

Notes

1. See Eytan's telegram to the Israel delegation in New York, MH13123, 5 April 1951, 130.20/2433/5. Concerning the al-Hamma incident, see No. 108.
2. That same day the Israel Air Force bombed the police station at al-Hamma and several Syrian positions in the area.
3. See S. Ramati to B. De Ridder, 5 April 1951, 130.20/2433/5.
4. See No. 108.
5. G. Rafael suggested that a position paper be formulated for the Security Council in response to the Syrian complaint about eviction of the residents of the village of Baqra (Rafael's telegram to Eytan, 4 April 1951, 93.01/2203/5).

108. A. Eban to T. Lie. 5 April 1951

Note

1. See No. 100, n. 2.

109. G. Avner to M. Fischer. 6 April 1951

Notes

1. See No. 84.
2. Jakob Altmaier, member of the West German Bundestag (Social Democrat).
3. See Livneh to the West European Division, 14 March 1951, 130.10/2543/2.
4. See A. David to L. Kohn *et al.*, 18 March 1951, 130.10/2543/2.
5. See Livneh to Altmaier, 6 March 1951 (error in original; should read 16 March), 130.10/2543/4.

Editorial Note

Aide-Mémoire *by the Government of the United States*

This document was presented to the Israel Embassy in Washington on 7 April and also delivered the next day by the U.S. Ambassador in Tel Aviv to the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry. A similar message was handed to the Syrian Government. The contents were reported by the U.S. media on 9 April. (See *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 626–27, n. 3; and Bendor to the Consulate in New York, 8 April 1951, 93.03/84/21.)

110. *Aide-Mémoire* by the Government of the United States. 7 April 1951

Notes

1. See No. 108.
2. See No. 107 and n. 2 *ibid.*

111. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 7 April 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 95–96, and No. 107 and n. 2 *ibid.*
2. Ales Bebler, Yugoslav Permanent Representative at the U.N.
3. Selim Sarper, Turkish Permanent Representative at the U.N.
4. See No. 108.

112. Israel Embassy in Washington to the United States Division (Telegram). 7 April 1951

Notes

1. The talk was held on 6 April; cf. report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 625–27.
2. See No. 108.
3. See Vol. 5, Editorial Note, pp. 593–94.
4. See No. 107 and n. 2 *ibid.*
5. See Nos. 110 and 113.
6. See No. 85.
7. See No. 84 and Editorial Note, p. 78.
8. See No. 121.

113. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to A. Eban (Washington).[1] 8 April 1951

Copy: 93.08/338/10

Bendor reports on a talk between the American ambassador and W. Eytan on 6 April 1951, with Gibson[2] and Bendor in attendance. The ambassador said he had been instructed to express his government's serious concern about the incidents on the Syrian border. His government generally took a favourable view towards the Hula drainage project, but actions not congruent with the Armistice Agreement had been committed. He had received his instructions before the policemen were murdered.[3] He was sure, however, that his government profoundly regretted the murders, and regretted similarly—if not more so—the reprisal actions.[4] He had been instructed to say that the continuation of these incidents would have a deleterious effect on the United States' relations with Israel. Davis said that he had already reported to his government on the Israeli public's response, including its demand that the government take practical steps. Even though the reaction was understandable, the reprisal actions were regrettable. Israel should continue to cooperate with the Armistice Commission and refrain from doing anything liable to undermine its authority or that of the United Nations.

In response, Eytan said that the Israel government fully supported the principles of collective security, and accused the Syrians of violating the Armistice Agreement. The work had been going on for several months with neither challenge nor complaint, he said. The Syrians had opened fire on the Israeli workers on 15 March and thereafter, creating a general sense of insecurity in the demilitarized zones, which reached its peak with the cold-blooded murder of the Israeli

policemen. He noted that the Syrian government had expressed no regret about the murder of the policemen, from which one could conclude that both the violations of the Agreement and the murder of the policemen had been committed with Syria's cognizance if not at its initiative.

Eytan argued that the Armistice Agreements were meant to bring the hostilities to a halt, not to impede the regular development of the countries signatory thereto. The Arab countries were exploiting the agreements to impede Israel's natural development and progress, and were refusing to make peace with her. It was in this context that Jordan refused to open the Mandelbaum Gate, Egypt closed the Suez Canal, and the Syrians sought to prevent the draining of the Hula Valley.

The ambassador noted that the United States government had approached Syria as well.

At the end of the talk, Eytan reviewed the record of Riley's memorandum,[5] and the exchange of letters between Ramati, Shoham, and Bossavy.[6] He criticized Colonel Bossavy's behaviour and praised the courage of the two American observers who rushed to al-Hamma despite the Syrian gunfire.

Notes

1. Also sent to the consulate in New York, the Research Division and the Middle East Division.
2. Raleigh A. Gibson, U.S. Consul-General in Jerusalem until April 1951.
3. See No. 108.
4. See Editorial Note, pp. 95–96, and No. 107 and n. 2 *ibid.*
5. See Editorial Note, pp. 80–81.
6. Reference is to an exchange of letters concerning the moratorium in the Hula area from 18 March to 23 March 1951. (See Eytan's telegram to Eban, 22 March 1951, and Paragraphs 6 and 10 of De Ridder's report to T. Lie, 27 March 1951, 130.02/2433/5.)

114. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 8 April 1951

Coded Tel. IWA351; Outg. 130.09/2308/21

Sharett classified the telegram as top-secret and intended it to be forwarded to Horowitz only. He reports on his telegrams to Elath and Fischer[1] concerning Horowitz's participation in the reparations campaign. In the meantime, he has received inquiries from Bonn about a face-to-face meeting with the Germans, including a suggestion by

Adenauer that the meeting be scheduled immediately after 28 March.[2] Sharett instructs the embassy to find out whether Bonn accepted in principle Israel's reparations claims, and if so, to arrange for a meeting between Fischer and Adenauer in Paris. Sharett explains that he could not wait until Horowitz's arrival, lest Adenauer's stay in Paris be cut short and the opportunity for a meeting lost. He instructs Horowitz to participate in such a talk if he arrives in Paris in time. As for the reparations claim itself, Sharett clarifies that Israel's demand must not be incorporated into the general reckoning of the German debt to the Allies. The Allies are demanding compensation out of existing equipment stock for damages inflicted on them during the war. Israel, by contrast, is demanding reparations out of Germany's current production for property stolen from the masses of Jews before and during the war.

Notes

1. Sharett asked them both to help Horowitz take advantage of his visit to London and Paris to exert additional pressure on the British and French with respect to reparations. He suggested that a new line of argument be used to persuade the British: the reparations would help Israel consolidate itself economically and frustrate Arab expectations of an economic collapse—expectations that hindered the peace process in Arab countries (Sharett's telegram to Elath, IL521, 8 April 1951, 130.09/2318/7).
2. See No. 109.

115. Ambassador of Israel in the United States to the Secretary of State. 9 April 1951

Note

1. See Vol. 5, No. 517 and n. 2 *ibid.*

116. G. Rafael to W. Eytan (Telegram). 9 April 1951

Notes

1. Eytan instructed delegation members to persuade Riley to rescind his instructions in his 5 March memorandum concerning the moratorium on work in the Hula area. He said the Israeli representative to the Armistice Commission had been told that since no Commission chairman would act against the recommendations in the memorandum, there was no chance of finding an agreeable solution as long as Riley's instructions remained in force (Eytan's telegram to Eban, 8 April 1951, 93.01/2207/16).

2. On 27 March, De Ridder sent the U.N. Secretary-General a detailed report on developments in the Hula dispute since 12 March, and on actions taken by the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission to alleviate the tension. (27 March 1951, 130.02/2433/5)
3. Reference is to Paragraph (d) of the 5 March memorandum (No. 100, n. 2).
4. See No. 113, n. 6.
5. David K. Niles, Administrative Assistant to the President of the United States.

117. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions Abroad. 9 April 1951

Coded Tel. IL523; Outg.: 130.09/2318/7

In anticipation of the upcoming Security Council debate on the complaints lodged by Israel and Syria concerning the al-Hamma incident,[3] Eytan forwards guidelines on informational activities in the various capitals. Israel's representatives are to insist on the following: (a) To stress the legality and civilian nature of the Hula drainage work, and to point out that Riley had found the work to be permissible from the military point of view and consistent with the Armistice.[5] (b) To stress that since October, 1950, drainage work had gone on undisturbed. The Syrians' motives in trying to halt the work are unclear, apart from their desire to delay and impede the area's development. (c) Beginning in mid-March and continuing until early April, the Syrians opened fire from their territory in order to stop the work. During this time, a tractor driver was killed and substantial material damage was inflicted.[6] (d) Already at that initial stage, Israel had considered lodging a complaint with the Security Council. However, it did not wish to blow up the matter out of proportion and hoped the entire affair would be settled quietly through the Armistice Commission. (e) On 4 April, the Syrian army opened fire on an Israeli patrol and killed seven policemen.[8] The Syrians' failure to apologize for the murders indicates that they were committed by order of the Syrian government, which, for reasons originating in its own internal weakness, is interested in "heating up" the border and thus gaining the sympathies of the army and public opinion. (f) In view of the situation that had arisen, Israel was forced to react vigorously against the [Syrian military] position from which the policemen had been murdered.[9] (g) The Israel government will refrain from further military action if the Syrians keep the peace. Israel has not introduced forces into the demilitarized zone and has no intention of doing so.

Notes

1. Michael Amir, Israel Minister to Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg.
2. Moshe Ishai, Israel Minister to Yugoslavia until June 1951. Subsequently Minister to Italy.
3. See No. 100, n. 4, and No. 108.
4. See Information to Israel Missions Abroad, 6 April 1951, 130.02/2433/7.
5. See Editorial Note, pp. 80–81.
6. See No. 98, n. 1.
7. See Vol. 5, Editorial Note, pp. 593–94.
8. See No. 108.
9. See Editorial Note, pp. 95–96, and No. 107, n. 2.

118. G. Rafael to W. Eytan (Telegram). 10 April 1951

Notes

1. Eytan commended the arguments used by Rafael in his talk with Riley on 2 April. (See telegram of 10 April 1951, 130.09/2338/14.)
2. Constantine E. Zinchenko, U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Security Council Affairs.
3. In a memorandum dated 14 March 1951, Eban proposed a phased resolution of the Korea problem. (See Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 243, 28 March 1951, 93.03/3073/4.)
4. See No. 108.
5. 1949. See Vol. 3, No. 343.
6. See Editorial Note, pp. 95–96, and No. 107, n. 2.

119. M. Sharett [Tel Aviv] to W. Eytan. 10 April 1951

Copy: 93.03/3008/3

Sharett expresses concern about possible friction with the French member of the Israel-Syria Armistice Commission,[1] basing himself on a Middle East Division memorandum.[2] He says the General Staff ought to be warned against precipitating such a chain of events, because experience has shown that personal attacks on U.N. personnel do Israel no good and in fact have done it harm. Instead, Sharett suggests explaining to U.N. officials in Israel and New York that it would be a mistake to appoint a French officer to head the Israel-Syria Armistice Commission, in view of the traditional French position on the Israel-Syria border issue. Sharett stresses that special care should be taken not to provoke France against Israel by wounding its self-esteem.

Notes

1. Rosset, Major in the French Army; Deputy Chairman of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission.
2. The memorandum stated that Israel's representative considered Rosset no better than Bossavy, and noted that if there was any intention to keep him in his position, the appointment could be contested on the grounds that (1) a chairman could be appointed only after consultation with representatives of both sides, and (2) he must exceed them either in rank or in seniority. Rosset had remarked to Israel's representative that "when you contest Bossavy's continued tenure as chairman, you must bear in mind that his assignment is not purely and exclusively military; it is political, too, since he has diplomatic status and is a member of the French political delegation" (130.02/2433/6).

120. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 10 April 1951

Notes

1. Reginald James Bowker, British Assistant Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
2. Reference is to Ben-Gurion's statement in the Tel Aviv Commercial and Industrial Club on 7 April, to the effect that the U.N. institutions were not empowered to order Israel to cease work in the demilitarized zone, and that even if they did so, Israel would not comply. He expressed hope that the punitive action against Syria would restore calm.
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 95–96, and No. 107, n. 2.
4. Cf. Bowker's report in document dated 10 April 1951, PRO, FO371/91373.

121. A. Eban to the United States Division (Telegram). 10 April 1951

Note

1. Cf. report on conversation in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 630–31.

122. E. Ben-Horin[1] (Tel Aviv) to G. Avner. 12 April 1951

Memorandum: 130.02/2394/4

Ben-Horin sharply criticizes the I.D.F.'s attitude towards Israel's foreign policy, as expressed in various aspects of the Hula affair. He says the Army's attitude is based on a one-sided and superficial reading of the concept of "national security". He calls for a consultation within

the Ministry in order to adopt principles concerning political and military problems, and to frame proposals for the most efficient coordination with the I.D.F. General Staff. Ben-Horin assumes that there is disagreement within the Ministry on these issues, and hopes for this very reason that it will take decisions binding on all staff members. Ben-Horin believes the Army has a clear-cut policy and will therefore win the day unless the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presents an unequivocal policy line of its own. He is prepared to present more detailed terms of reference.[2]

Notes

1. Eliashiv Ben-Horin, Principal Assistant to the West European Division; from June 1951, Assistant to the Permanent Delegation at the U.N.
2. Although Ben-Horin's proposal was greeted favourably, the proposed deliberations apparently never took place. Instead, a general discussion on the Hula affair was held as proposed by the Director of the United States Division. (See Ministry officials' internal correspondence attached to the letter.)

123. Z. Argaman (Moscow) to W. Eytan. 12 April 1951

Coded Tel. PI646; Inc.: 130.09/2325/6

Argaman reports on a talk with Shchiborin.[1] Argaman informed him, in conformance with Ministry of Foreign Affairs guidelines, of how the events on the Syrian border developed. He requested that the Soviets support a Security Council resolution ensuring that work would continue with neither interference nor hindrance. Shchiborin thanked him for the information and promised to forward the request to his superiors. He added that the Soviet Union believes that any dispute can be solved peaceably without the use of force; this will be its position in the case at hand as well. He asked whether the Syrian provocations had not been fomented by external forces interested in generating strife between Israel and Syria. Argaman replied that, according to his information, this did not seem to be the case. *Aliya* affairs were discussed later in the talk; Argaman said he would submit a separate memorandum on this matter.[3]

Notes

1. Aleksandr D. Shchiborin, Deputy Director of the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Countries, U.S.S.R. Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. No. 117.
3. Argaman apprised Shchiborin of the sensitivity of Israeli public opinion to any report in the Soviet press about Israel, and mentioned Israel's regret that "So far, nothing of the Jewish people's historic enterprise in Israel has been reflected in the Soviet press". In response, Shchiborin said that Israel's demand for sympathy in the Soviet press "must be based on reciprocity". He expressed sorrow that Israeli newspapers, including *Davar*, published "defamatory articles full of falsehood about the U.S.S.R., its government and its leaders". He said that "The Soviet public is no less sensitive than the Israeli public to reports from abroad that offend it and its government". He added that the Soviet Union's fundamental policy was peace, and that the Soviet public's attitude towards foreign countries was determined by these countries' attitude towards the Soviet peace policy. "The Israeli press which discusses the issue of world peace describes the Soviet Union as being conquest-hungry and war-mongering. . . . Under such circumstances one cannot demand that the Soviet press take any other approach". . . . In reply, Argaman pointed out that the Israeli press did indeed criticize the Soviet Union, but that "This should not be construed as slander or maligning the Soviet Union's good intentions on the issue of world peace". Furthermore, "The [Israeli] press quite often runs articles praising the Soviet Union's tremendous economic achievements". Argaman's impression from the talk was that Shchiborin regretted "the attitude of the Israeli press towards the Soviet Union's peace efforts, and sincerely wishes to see it change". Argaman also understood that the reference was not to the press alone but to Israel's foreign policy in general. (See Argaman to Levavi, 19 April 1951, 130.11/2492/16.)

124. Bureau of the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations and the Israel Embassy in Washington. 12 April 1951

Coded Tel. TNW49; Outg.: 130.09/2339/1

Pursuant to a previous telegram,[1] Eytan reports on his talk with De Ridder. De Ridder claimed that the problems in the Hula Valley began when Israel started work on the east bank in order to widen the Jordan watercourse and change its flow. The armistice line was fixed as the boundary of sovereignty; the status of the zone between the lines is different; in it sovereignty is diminished because of the powers vested by the Armistice Agreement in the Commission Chairman. Anything pertaining to implementation of the Armistice Agreement in this territory was to be brought before the Chairman. Eytan rejected De Ridder's assertions and insisted on Israel's full sovereignty within the zone. Shiloah brought up Riley's memorandum and read out a telegram pertaining to it.[2] De Ridder and Rajasooria argued that Riley had not provided them with any instructions in this regard.

De Ridder stated forcefully that nothing would be done which might modify the status of the demilitarized zone and the proportion

of Jews and Arabs living there. He vigorously objected to any continuation of the work before the Arab land question was resolved, strongly demanding that the Arabs who had abandoned their lands under Israeli pressure be allowed to return. An agreement might be reached without hindrance, he stressed, if Israel modified its attitude and applied to the Chairman. Eytan and Shiloah made it clear that Israel would not discuss the problem of land for the Arabs if the purpose of these discussions was to prevent resumption of the work. Eytan and Shiloah informed De Ridder that Israel would agree to a limited postponement so that the Chairman might find an arrangement. At a certain stage of the talk, De Ridder demanded not only that the Arabs be allowed to return to the demilitarized zone, but that the movement of armed Israeli civilians and police officers be prohibited there, and that no increase of Israeli police presence be allowed. At a later stage in the conversation, he agreed to reserve these matters for discussion after the sides reached agreement. As the talk ended, Rajasooria hinted that the Syrians were about to petition vigorously for the Arabs' return and for compensation to the Arabs, and would view these as preconditions for the resumption of Armistice Commission deliberations.

Notes

1. Eytan reported on the talk between Israeli representatives and De Ridder on 12 April. The two sides agreed: (a) to take immediate action to restore quiet to the border areas; (b) to act to reconvene the Armistice Commission; (c) to cooperate towards activating the Armistice Commission; (d) to permit the Commission to discuss issues on which both sides might be able to agree, such as the removal of forces from the demilitarized zone, refraining from opening fire, facilitation of UNTSO's work, and reaffirmation of the Chairman's powers under Paragraph 5 of the Armistice Agreement; (e) setting aside other matters, such as the repatriation of Arabs, compensation and the like, for discussion with the Chairman at a later date. (Telegram dated 12 April 1951, 93.08/338/43; see also report on the meeting in Eytan's memorandum to Kohn, 15 April 1951, 130.02/2433/6.)
2. No. 116.

125. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 13 April 1951

Note

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 80–81.

126. Y. Shimoni (Tel Aviv) to M. Sharett. 15 April 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2413/32

Shimoni reports that the American Embassy in Tel Aviv inquired as to how Israel would vote on Japan's request to join the World Health Organization. The Foreign Minister's most recent instructions had been to abstain from votes on Japan's admission to international organizations. In a memorandum dating from 11 January 1950,[1] Shimoni had recommended that these instructions be amended. He repeats this recommendation and his supporting arguments as presented in the memorandum: (a) Japan cannot be compared to Germany, since Japan had not treated the Jews brutally. Japan's case is more similar to Italy's. (b) Although it is difficult to assess whether Fascism has been completely eradicated in Japan, that country seems to be no worse than several others. (c) It should be assumed that the Americans are interested in a vote in favour of Japan's admission, and will view Israel's refusal more as an anti-American than as an anti-Japanese gesture. Shimoni added that if his recommendation is rejected, he suggests that Israel ascertain how Britain, Sweden, India, Burma, and Indonesia will vote.

Note

1. See Vol. 5, No. 20.

127. E. Sasson to M. Sharett. 16 April 1951

Note

1. Segan-Aluf Uriel Shai.

128. A. Lourie to W. Eytan (Telegram). 16 April 1951

Note

1. Daniel J. van Balluseck, Netherlands Permanent Representative at the U.N., President of the Security Council in March–April 1951.

129. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to D. Ben-Gurion. 16 April 1951

Orig.: IMDEA 128.81/47

Sharett calls Ben-Gurion's attention to two accusations that the United Nations and the U.S. government are levelling against Israel on the Hula dispute: dispatch of a patrol unit to Hammat Gader,[1] and the reprisal bombing of al-Hamma.[2] Sharett criticizes the I.D.F.'s policy in the zone. According to Sharett, the I.D.F. had refrained from patrolling the al-Hamma area from the time the demilitarized zone was established until the day the patrol unit was caught in a death trap. He believes it was a mistake to have sent a patrol there at a time when tension was so high, especially with air support that the other side could construe only as deliberate provocation. Sharett wonders if the operation's planners had been aware that the Syrians would perceive it thus, and whether they took into account that a disaster might result. Furthermore, Sharett intimates that if the army officials had known a disaster was liable to occur, they had knowingly sent men to their death. By the same token, if they had not anticipated the Syrian reaction, they were guilty of a surprising lack of awareness as to the gravity of the situation. Either way, says Sharett, the operation was indicative of "a vast degree of thoughtlessness and irresponsibility".

Sharett claims that on the face of it, the dispatch of the patrol had been a mere military operation, seemingly carried out under the Armistice terms. In fact, however, Israel had overstepped the bounds of its regular activities in the demilitarized zone by dispatching the patrol, thereby establishing a political fact at great risk.

In view of the unhealthy effect the affair was likely to have on Israel's standing in the U.N. and its vital interests in the U.S., Sharett requests that the army henceforth refrain from taking such steps without first reporting them to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and giving the Ministry an opportunity to express its opposition.

In view of the lessons learned from the whole affair, Sharett recommends that armistice matters not be entrusted to the army alone. He distinguishes among three stages that generally characterize armistice disputes: (a) taking a stance, establishing a *fait accompli,* and undertaking military action; (b) negative reaction by the U.N. powers, criticism abroad, and protests by the superpowers; (c) Ministry of Foreign Affairs intervention in defence of what was done, followed by a quest for a peaceful resolution to the conflict that had arisen. To prevent this situation, Sharett recommends an arrangement that would ensure the permanent participation of representatives of the

Foreign Ministry together with the I.D.F. in the daily handling of armistice issues.

Notes

1. See No. 108, Paragraph 2.
2. See Editorial Note, pp. 95–96, and No. 107, n. 2.

130. M. Fischer to G. Avner. 16 April 1951

Notes

1. Jean A. Binoche, Director of Africa-Levant Department, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. See No. 120, n. 2.

131. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 16 April 1951

Notes

1. Sharett announced Israel's position on the Hula dispute in a press conference on 15 April (see No. 188). Summarizing his remarks, he stated that the government wished to reaffirm its adherence to the Armistice Agreement with Syria, and as long as this agreement remained in force, Israel would continue to honour its attendant commitments. He then announced Israel's decision to continue cooperating with the Armistice Commission in resolving the disputes arising from the implementation of the Agreement. (See Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 265, 19 April 1951, 93.03/3008/3.)
2. Michael McDermott, Special Assistant for Press Relations to the Secretary of State. Concerning the press release, see Editorial Note, p. 97.
3. See No. 120, n. 2.
4. See Editorial Note, pp. 80–81.
5. See No. 87, n. 3.
6. See full report on conversation by S. Bendor, 29 April 1951, 93.03/84/21.
7. See Helm's telegram to the British Foreign Office, 17 April 1951, PRO, FO371/91378.

132. R. Shiloah to S. al-Rifa'i. 16 April 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 79–80.
2. See Vol. I, Editorial Note, p. 298, and No. 291.

133. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 17 April 1951

Notes

1. The conversation took place on 16 April. Cf. report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 638–39.
2. See No. 120, n. 2.

134. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 17 April 1951

Note

1. See No. 105 and n. 2 *ibid.*

135. G. Rafael to W. Eytan (Telegram). 17 April 1951

Notes

1. The meeting took place on 13 April. Cf. report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 646–47.
2. See No. 87, n. 3.
3. See Rafael to Eytan, 18 April 1951, 130.02/2433/7.

136. A. Eban to W. Eytan (Telegram). 18 April 1951

Note

1. At the Security Council meeting. (See *SCOR, Sixth Year*, 541st Meeting, 17 April 1951, pp. 1–20.)

137. T. Kollek (Washington) to D. Ben-Gurion. 21 April 1951

Copy: 130.20/2467/3

Kollek describes the importance of Ben-Gurion's forthcoming visit to the United States in terms of its effect on shaping relations between American Jewry and Israel. He asserts that the Americans need a central personality to serve as a symbol of a specific political method, enterprise, or trend of thought. He mentions Roosevelt as an example for the general American cause, and Weizmann for the Zionist enterprise. For this reason Kollek regards the personal encounter between Ben-Gurion and the American President as vitally important, and attempts to explain to Ben-Gurion the difficulties awaiting him on

such a visit in view of the recent events in the demilitarized zone along the Israel-Syrian border.

Kollek argues that the United States took a grave view of Israel's bombing of al-Hamma, comparing it to the bombing of the Chinese bases in Manchuria. The incident took on a most grave aspect after Ben-Gurion's speech,[1] in which he declared that Israel would continue draining the Hula irrespective of any United Nations resolution. Kollek clarifies that he does not object to [Israel's] desire to gain control of the demilitarized zone, but believes that tactical errors have been made in carrying out the operation.

The affair has only worsened since the visit of McGhee and Jones to Israel. Although both were deeply impressed by what they saw in Israel, they were no less impressed by the repeated assertion in Arab capitals that the U.S. was assisting Israel and offering it both economic and political support. They were influenced by the Arab argument that if the United States was interested in the Arab Near East, it would have to demonstrate a neutral approach to the areas of contention between the Arabs and Israel. Even before the most recent developments, it became apparent after Feinberg's talks with the President[2] that the State Department had succeeded in persuading the President of the need to be careful when supporting Israel and to take account of Arab sensitivities. Kollek assumes that in anticipation of Ben-Gurion's visit the State Department will update the President on all aspects of the Hula dispute.

Kollek provides Ben-Gurion with latest details on the appearances awaiting him during his visit and prepares the Prime Minister for them.

Notes

1. See No. 120, n. 2.
2. See No. 105 and n. 2 *ibid.*
3. David Marcus, colonel in the U.S. Army, who helped Israel in its War of Independence, assumed command of the Jerusalem front in May, 1948, and was accidentally shot and killed a month later.
4. Golda Meyerson, Minister of Labour.

138. Message from the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Prime Minister of Israel. 23 April 1951

Notes

1. Herbert Morrison. The British Minister in Tel Aviv handed Ben-Gurion this message on 24 April. Ben-Gurion welcomed the declaration, but refrained from making any

positive response on the military subject. Instead, he stressed the importance of peace with the Arabs—especially with Egypt—and of developing Israel's economic capability. (See Comay's telegram to Elath, 25 April 1951, 130.09/2318/7.)
2. See Nos. 68 and 72.

139. E. Najar to the West European Division. 23 April 1951

Notes

1. Emile Najar, Counsellor at the Israel Legation in Paris.
2. Robert P. Luc, Deputy Director of Africa-Levant Department, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

140. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 24 April 1951

Notes

1. Reference is to a Greek ship with a cargo of building materials, *en route* from Africa to Eilat at the time.
2. See No. 87, n. 3.

141. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to D. Ben-Gurion. 25 April 1951

Memorandum: 130.02/2433/7

Sharett forwards Eytan's proposal[1] to Ben-Gurion and recommends that it be adopted. Eytan suggests that Israel apologize to the Security Council and admit that it had erred in bombing al-Hamma. Eytan was confident "that such a step would make a deep impression on the Security Council and the entire United Nations, and that the member states would view such a gesture as reflecting Israel's moral stature". He encloses a draft of the apology.[2]

Notes

1. See Appendix below.
2. The attached draft is omitted here. Eytan's recommendation was accepted. At the Security Council meeting of 25 April, Eban, speaking for the government, expressed regret that Israel was compelled to take action contrary to the Armistice Agreement. This was said in the course of a lengthy speech on Israel's right to drain the Hula

and establish settlements in the demilitarized zone. Addressing himself to the progression of events up to the murder of the seven Israeli policemen and the government's decision to bomb al-Hamma, Eban said the following:

"The Government of Israel was moved to this decision not only by the wanton murders of the previous days. It also noted that no word of apology or regret was heard from Damascus and that the Syrian Government had ample opportunity to disavow this deed or subsequently to disassociate itself from it by promising at least to discover and punish the men responsible. Up to this date, Damascus has still lacked the decency to express any regret for these casualties. Nevertheless I am now specifically instructed by my government to say in all frankness and candour that it, for its part, regrets that it felt constrained to take action which may not be compatible with the terms of the Armistice Agreement. It asks the Security Council to accept the sincere expression of its regret and its assurance that it was only the extreme provocation and the feeling that there was need for energetic self-defence that moved it originally to that decision."

142. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 25 April 1951

Notes

1. See No. 141, n. 2.
2. See No. 100, n. 2.
3. Cf. No. 143.

143. G. Rafael to W. Eytan (Telegram). 26 April 1951

Notes

1. See No. 142 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See No. 140.
3. Andrew W. Cordier, Executive Assistant to the U.N. Secretary-General.

144. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to E. Sasson (Ankara). 28 April 1951

Copy: 130.02/2410/9

Sharett answers Sasson's letter[1] criticizing Israel's policy on the Arab issue. Sharett rejects Sasson's assessment that Israel is making insufficient efforts to break the ice with the Arabs and establish contact with them, and claims that efforts to promote contacts with them are in fact being made all the time. By way of example, he mentions that Shiloah is due to meet with King Abdallah[2] that very morning. No one

knows yet whether this meeting holds the promise of some progress or will be yet another case of "marking time". Sharett adds that he cannot recall any practical proposal that was not put to the test if it contained a modicum of substance.

Sharett rejects Sasson's proposal for a consultation in Paris on the Arab issue, arguing that previous deliberations on the same issue had not led to any progress. Besides, it was no simple matter to take diplomats out of their legations and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials [outside Israel], in order to bring them together in the middle of Europe as the entire world looks on. As an alternative, Sharett suggests that all would-be participants in Sasson's proposed conference present written proposals for a plan of action *vis-à-vis* the Arab world. On the basis of the responses, the possibility of holding the consultation proposed by Sasson will be considered.

Notes

1. Sasson expressed disappointment that his plan to hold consultations on Israel-Arab relations during his visit to Israel had come to nought. He was nevertheless pleased with the attitude taken by Eytan and Divon, which indicated to him that "The Foreign Ministry is convinced . . . and ready to do everything within its power to break the ice and get things moving". After Rafael and Eban also expressed support of his approach, Sasson decided to press his plan again. His proposal to Sharett was to hold a small-scale consultation in Paris to discuss the totality of Israel-Arab relations and to draft a working plan for the Arab countries and the West (130.02/2410/9).
2. See No. 145.

145. M. Sasson [Jerusalem]: Report on Negotiations with King Abdallah. 28 April 1951

130.02/2451/19

Sasson reports on recent developments in negotiations with King Abdallah. The king's latest letter[1] gave the impression that he was under the influence of Prime Minister Samir al-Rifa'i. In an attempt to alter the *status quo* and drive a wedge between the King and his Prime Minister, Sasson met Abd al-Ghani al-Karmi several times. In these meetings, Sasson had attempted to make the King more amenable. Al-Karmi proposed a secret meeting between the king and Shiloah, without Rifa'i. Sasson replied cautiously; without actually urging Al-Karmi to arrange the meeting, he implied that he favoured the proposal.

The meeting with Abdallah took place in Amman on 28 April 1951 in the residence of the seneschal of the king's estate. In attendance

were Shiloah, Sasson, and Abd al-Ghani al-Karmi. The king opened with a long discourse on the unnatural situation prevailing between the Arabs and the Israelis. He said that both Arabs and Israelis needed peace, and that they should embark upon good neighbourly relations. He then asserted that Mt. Scopus belonged to Jordan, and that from a military point of view he could not accede to leaving it in Israeli hands. Shiloah explained that no Israeli government would cede Mt. Scopus, and that the king's stance was tantamount to a cessation of negotiations. Hearing this, the king proposed: (1) to set aside the argument concerning sovereignty over Mt. Scopus, concentrating instead on free access to it; and (2) that Israel consult with the king personally before answering Rifa'i's next letter.

At the end of the talk, the king thanked Shiloah for Israel's agreement to release some of the blocked bank accounts belonging to persons residing in Jordan.[2]

Notes

1. Abdallah's response to Israel's letter (No. 132) has not been traced. However, see Rifa'i's answer in No. 139 (Appendix.)
2. For more details on the conversation, see Comay to Elath, 7 May 1951, 93.04/36/16, and Helm's telegram to the British Foreign Office, 7 May 1951, PRO, FO371/91364; *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 656–57.

146. E. Sasson (Ankara) to M. Sharett. 29 April 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2401/12

Sasson warns about the danger of renewed war with the Arabs and suggests ways of preventing or postponing this threat for a number of years. He reminds Sharett of his prediction on the eve of Israel's War of Independence — that Israel would never achieve peace with the Arabs even if its forces reached the gates of Damascus. Apparently, Ben-Gurion had believed at the time that if Israel were to vanquish the Arabs on the battlefield, it would be in a position to dictate peace terms. Realities had disproved this assessment and confirmed Sasson's predictions. Sasson describes himself as having toiled indefatigably for the past three years in order to attain peace with the Arabs—without success. The fact that his predictions came true lends force to his current assessment that Israel should expect to face the danger of a "second round" with the Arabs. The recent dispute with the Syrians shows how fully the Arab world regards Israel as a foreign implant, fears it, and will pay any price to eliminate it. It also shows how far

Israel was from a settlement, and how distorted and erroneous are the Arab perceptions of Israel. Moreover, the clash with Syria also shows how unwilling the Western world is to accept Israel's vigorous responses, and how it views the Israel-Arab conflict as an obstacle to its plans for defence of the Middle East. The fact that the State Department reprimanded Israel for bombing al-Hamma[1] but did not condemn the Syrians for murdering the Israeli policemen speaks for itself. Sasson admits that as in the past, his current assessment of a "second round" is not based on reliable and authoritative information. He believes reports from the Arab world are nothing but bleak scenarios, and Arab newspapers are hate sheets. Although Sasson hopes his predictions prove false, he still believes it necessary to prepare for such a contingency, and proposes two ways of preventing or delaying it: (1) strengthening Israel's military might and stabilizing its economic situation; (2) stepping up diplomatic activity among the Arabs. Again he mentions the need to hold a consultation in Paris with the participation of experts in Arab affairs and several Israeli envoys, for the purpose of exploring the problem of relations with the Arab countries.

Note

1. See No. 110.

147. President Weizmann to President Truman. 30 April 1951

Note

1. The last section of the draft that was prepared for dispatch, dealing with safeguarding world peace, was omitted from the original letter handed to Truman. (The draft is kept in File 105/1747/46.)

148. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to M. Amir (Brussels). 30 April 1951

Copy: 93.02/172/9

Avner replies to Amir's letter[1] on relations with France. He placates Amir by asserting that Israel is fully exploiting its convergence of interests with France in the Middle East. On the basis of their common policy against the Arab League and against the growing pan-

Islamism, Israel was receiving economic, arms procurement, defence and even political aid from France.

At the same time, Avner clarifies that France supports Israel against the Arab League or against Egypt and Jordan only insofar as France has actual or political conflicts with these countries. This is not true with respect to Syria. France does not wish to hamper Syria's efforts to bolster its strength, and close and good relations exist between the two countries. For this reason, too, France supports Syria in its current dispute with Israel.

Moreover, France's influence in the international arena is limited. France adheres to American policy and confines its aid to Israel to the practical domain only. Israel should not expect it to issue public statements of policy.

In addition to these factors, one must take account of the hostility to Israel of the French legation in Tel Aviv. Without the activity of Fischer in Paris, who is more influential there than France's legation is in Israel, Israel would not have obtained as much French aid as it did. The French legation is even trying to influence the Belgian minister, with whom Israel has occasionally had practical problems that even took the form of anti-Semitic outbursts.

Note

1. In File 130.10/2539/14.

149. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 30 April 1951

Note

1. Trygve H. Lie, Secretary-General of the U.N.

150. *Aide-Mémoire* from the Government of the United States to the Government of Israel. 1 May 1951

Note

1. See No. 88.

Editorial Note

Visit by D. Ben-Gurion to the United States

On 2 May 1951 Ben-Gurion embarked on a four-week visit to the United States (3–31 May), returning to Israel on 7 June. Although the visit was defined as unofficial, Ben-Gurion met senior administration officials in Washington, holding official talks with the Secretaries of State and Defense and President Truman's political adviser. He also dined with the President and met him for a brief talk. (See Nos. 137, 156, 162 and 170.) He later attended several meals in his honour in Washington, with the participation of judges, senior economic and political figures, members of Congress, and labour leaders. After his visit to Washington, Ben-Gurion set out on a coast-to-coast trip, meeting Jewish community leaders, participating in Bonds rallies and events, and meeting governors, mayors and state legislators. (For more information on the visit see Herlitz to the United States Division, 7 June 1951, 130.20/2467/3.)

151. M. Sasson (Tel Aviv) to R. Shiloah. 2 May 1951

Copy: 130.02/2408/13

Sasson appends to his letter the Jordanian prime minister's response to Shiloah's letter.[1] The letter was forwarded to him by al-Karmi, who added the following details: The letter had been debated at length in the Jordanian cabinet, and the king had not succeeded in persuading Rifa'i to modify its contents. After pressure, he had succeeded in adding the last paragraph, inviting Israel to suggest alternative solutions.

The king wished to inform Shiloah that he was keeping his word as to all points on which they had reached agreement at their last meeting.[2] He wanted to remind Shiloah of his promise not to send an Israeli response without meeting with him first,[3] and expressed the hope that his prime minister's visit to Egypt would create a good opportunity for such a meeting.

Al-Karmi assumed that the Jordanian prime minister had shown the letter to the British minister in Amman and had consulted with him on its contents. Rifa'i was aware of the exchange of letters between the king and Israel, and wished to find out whether al-Karmi had been the courier. Al-Karmi's denial angered him, and Rifa'i instructed him to find out if someone else was mediating between the king and Israel.

Rifa'i asked al-Karmi to sign the letter to Shiloah for him, and that it bear the initials of his title (P.M.). Al-Karmi considered the letter a

typical Rifa'i response, underscoring his intent to procrastinate in the negotiations with Israel so he could continue as prime minister.

Notes

1. See No. 132.
2. On 28 April. See No. 145 and n. 2 *ibid.*
3. Shiloah and Abdallah met again on 11 May. The king tried to placate Shiloah by asserting that Rifa'i's proposal in his letter, i.e., to hand the issue of sovereignty over Mt. Scopus to the International Court for resolution, was still far from implementation. In the meantime, he proposed that action be taken on two levels: (1) continue discussing the details of access to Mt. Scopus under the Armistice Agreement; and (2) bring the sovereignty issue before the International Court irrespective of these discussions. Shiloah acquiesced, informing the king on 13 May that Israel acceded to his proposal. (See Helm to British Foreign Office, 15 May 1951; cf. slightly different report in Kirkbride's letters to Furlonge, 12 May 1951, PRO, FO371/91364. See also *FRUS*, 1951, V, p. 661, n. 4.)
4. The correspondence has not been traced.

Editorial Note

Exchanges of Fire with Syria and the Battle of Tel al-Mutilla

On 2 May, tension on the Israel-Syria border in the demilitarized zone north of Lake Kinneret again mounted. The new round began with a firing incident with regular Syrian forces and local Arab residents who crossed the demilitarized zone into Israeli territory and took control of several positions, including Tel al-Mutilla. In the exchanges of fire with an I.D.F. patrol that attempted to expel the Syrians, four Israeli soldiers were killed. Both sides advanced forces into the zone that night, and artillery exchanges took place during the next two days. A truce was arranged on 4 May, but it was violated the next day. On the morning of 6 May, I.D.F. forces drove the Syrians out of all the positions they had seized in Israeli territory, at a cost of 40 troops killed. By order of the Chief of General Staff, the number of casualties was not made public; Yadin reported to the government that about 25 had been killed. (See Nos. 154, 158, and 159; cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 654–55.)

152. G. Rafael (New York) to M. Sharett. 3 May 1951

Orig.: 130.15/2570/7

Replying to Sharett's inquiry,[1] Rafael presents his approach to the problem of peace with the Arab countries: (a) *Basic assumptions*:

(1) Three years have passed since the War of Independence. (2) The Arab offensive was a total failure; Israel had come into being and was leading a successful existence. (3) Leading Arab politicians have not yet despaired of destroying Israel by the resumption of military action. Other Arab statesmen are waiting for Israel to collapse by itself under its economic burden. (4) On the other hand, the Arabs are not sure that their intentions will come to pass, and are apprehensive lest Israel's development should endanger the very existence of the Arab countries. (5) As the international situation steadily deteriorates and the danger of an outbreak of general war presents itself, the United States and Great Britain must pay special attention to events in the area, and should be more keenly interested in establishing normal relations among the region's countries. (6) Relations between Israel and its neighbours are based on the Armistice Agreements, which were signed as a stage towards peace accords. The Agreements were meant to solve a partial, interim problem. Dangerous fissures have appeared in the Agreements over the years, and the whole structure is liable to collapse unless its foundation is broadened.

(b) *Information and attitude*: (1) The Arab world has to be told that even as its position worsens, Israel is becoming stronger and is thus enhancing its bargaining power. (2) As it gains strength, Israel is becoming an important power in the Middle East array, and anyone planning the region's defence will have to reckon with it. (3) Israel has to find ways of persuading the Arabs that immigration will not lead to expansion, and that Israel has no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of the Arab countries. (4) Israel ought to react to Arab hostility with a greater measure of modesty and patience. Although Israel must be strong, it should not show the Arabs that it believes only might will persuade them. (5) Israel has to understand that the Arabs view it as a revolutionary element intruding on their desert tranquillity; therefore they should not be asked impatiently to adjust to Israeli ways.

(c) *Courses of Action*: (1) A list should be drawn up of all the unresolved disputes between Israel and each Arab country. (2) Ways of resolving each and every problem should be explored. (3) Every Arab country should be assured that the problems between it and Israel are being discussed, and that Israel will not be willing to solve them at another Arab country's expense. (4) Israeli policy should aim for a gradual attainment of peace. (5) The major problem is that of the refugees. The most likely avenue towards a solution lies in large-scale development works serving the entire area, carried out with U.N. co-operation and American and British financial aid. The compensation process should be speeded up, thereby satisfying the claims of property-owning Palestinians who wield influence in the neighbouring

countries. (6) Joint development projects (e.g., the potash works) should be encouraged. (7) A decision should be taken on such concessions as can be made for the sake of peace, such as a free zone at Haifa port. (8) Action should be taken to improve the U.N. mechanism that deals with the country's problems. Riley should be given more authority, and a single U.N. political coordinator should be appointed. (9) Israel should marshal British and American support for political and economic pressure on the Arabs, with intent to shake them out of their present stalemate. (10) Israel should intensify its contacts with Arab envoys in the U.N. and various capitals by appointing orientalists as secretaries in its legations. (11) Political action and economic cooperation with the Asian countries, particularly those of Muslim colouration, should be stepped up. (12) The circumstances of Israel's Arab population should be improved.

Note

1. Sharett reported on his proposal to Sasson to hold a consultation in Paris on policy towards the Arab world. (See No. 144 and n. 1 *ibid.*) He asked Rafael to present him as soon as possible with a summary of his thoughts and working proposals (30 April 1951, 93.01/2207/16).

153. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 4 May 1951

Copy: 130.20/2481/3

Bendor reports on the Prime Minister's conversation with the United States ambassador on 1 May 1951. The ambassador told Ben-Gurion that the Israeli government had taken a praiseworthy and very courageous step by expressing its regrets about the al-Hamma bombing.[1] The gesture made a favourable impression both in the State Department and in the U.N. The ambassador then inquired about the elections in Israel. Ben-Gurion said it was hard to predict the results; Israel's population had doubled [since the previous elections] and there was no way of knowing how the new immigrants would vote. He expressed hope that the small parties would disappear, and added that irrespective of the election returns, it was clear that a majority of the people supported the present government's foreign policy. The ambassador asked about the significance of the Mapam council elections,[2] and whether they augured a split in this party. The Prime Minister replied that he did not expect such a rift to occur, and that

the two factions would probably present a joint platform for the elections.

Notes

1. See No. 164 and n. 2 *ibid.*
2. The ambassador was probably referring to the results of the Mapam Conference elections on 24 April, in which the state of equilibrium between the party's two major factions was upset. Hashomer Hatsa'ir won 60 percent of the vote, compared with 30 percent for Le-ahdut Ha-'avoda. The two factions disagreed on the attitude to be taken by the party towards the Communist bloc.

154. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 4 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 141, n. 2.
2. See *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 663–64.
3. See Helm's telegram to the British Foreign Office, 4 May 1951, PRO, FO371/91376. Sharett also met the French Minister (see No. 160) and the Soviet Minister (see Levavi to the Israel Legations in Eastern Europe, 21 May 1951, 130.02/2410/20).

155. M. Keren (Washington) to the United States Division. 4 May 1951

Orig.: 130.20/2482/6

Keren reports on a talk he had on 30 April, during his visit to Israel, with American Ambassador M. Davis: (1) The ambassador mentioned that Israeli public opinion was uneducated, and opined that were it not for the pressure of public opinion, the government would not have decided to bomb al-Hamma.

(2) Davis believes in the possibility of peace between Israel and the Arab countries, and claims that Israel is not expending enough energy and initiative pursuing it. At the same time, he dismisses L. Jones' notion that Israel should try to court the Arabs by gestures such as the establishment of a free zone at Haifa. He believes that a policy of gestures would accomplish nothing of substance.

As for the talks with Abdallah, Davis thanked Shiloah for having always kept him accurately informed on the course of the talks, but

did not want to proffer unsolicited advice. Nevertheless, he suggested that the phrasing of Israel's most recent letter to the Jordanian prime minister[1] left much to be desired.

Davis mentioned the idea of giving advice several times during the talk. He stressed that he would offer his advice only if he knew it stood a chance of being accepted. While he must conform to State Department instructions, he would do nothing that clashed with his basic views, and promised that any advice he offered Israel would be sincere and imbued with good will.

(3) Davis praised the Cabinet ministers effusively, noting how impressed he was with the vigour with which the government and the people addressed themselves to the upbuilding and development of the country. He expressed satisfaction over the treatment shown him by the authorities, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(4) Davis praised the government for having expressed its regret over the bombing of al-Hamma.[2] He referred to the Israeli action as an unusual move in international politics and a manifestation of great political acumen.

(5) When the topic of *aliya* came up during the talk, Davis said he had come to realize that unhindered immigration was at the very heart of the Zionist idea, and that the United States government had to accept it as a *fait accompli.*

(6) Davis expressed concern about the large volume of Russian-language material on sale in the bookstores, and regretted that the German edition of *Readers' Digest* had been banned. He explained that the German-language magazine might provide information to broad segments of the population that were unable to profit from publications in English.

(7) Davis cautiously but overtly criticized his predecessor in office. McDonald, he said, had neglected the embassy's development, and he intended to reorganize it.

Throughout the talk, Keren was impressed with Davis's good will and sincerity, and his grasp and understanding of the situation in Israel. Keren believes that Davis would like to participate more intensively, in an advisory capacity, in shaping Israel's foreign policy. Keren recommended that the Ministry consider the utility of soliciting Davis's opinions on suitable occasions before taking foreign policy decisions.

Notes

1. See No. 132 and cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 647–49.
2. See No. 142 and n. 2 *ibid.*

156. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 5 May 1951

Notes

1. See report on Ben-Gurion's conversation with Marshall on 4 May, 21 June 1951, 93.03/337/4.
2. Sharett sent Marshall a courtesy letter before Ben-Gurion's visit (26 April 1951, 93.08/344/2).
3. See Editorial Note and Nos. 68, 69, 71 and 72.
4. See No. 138.
5. See No. 141, n. 2.
6. See Vol. 5, No. 517 (Appendix).
7. Evidently Thomas D. Cabot, Director of the Office of International Security Affairs, Department of State.
8. See No. 147.
9. W. Averell Harriman, Special Assistant to the President of the United States.
10. Theodore Tannenwald, Counsel to the Special Assistant to President Truman.

157. M. Sharett to B. L. De Ridder. 6 May 1951

Note

1. See Editorial Note, p. 119.

158. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 6 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 159.
2. Fares al-Khuri, Syrian Permanent Representative at the U.N.
3. See No. 107, n. 2.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 119.

159. M. Sharett to the President of the Security Council (Telegram). 7 May 1951

Note

1. See No. 157.

160. M. Sharett to M. Fischer (Telegram). 7 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 159.
2. Hanson W. Baldwin, Military Editor of the *New York Times*.

161. G. Rafael to M. Sharett (Telegram). 7 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 158.
2. See No. 157.
3. Reference is to a series of telegrams from De Ridder to the U.N. Secretary-General between 3 May and 6 May 1951, containing the UNTSO report on Israel-Syria military activity before and after the clash at Tel al-Mutilla. (U.N. documents S/2113, S/2121, S/2123, and S/2124, *SCOR, Sixth Year, Supplement for 1 April–30 June 1951*, pp. 96–105.)

162. A. Eban (Washington) to D. Ben-Gurion. 7 May 1951

Memorandum: 93.08/337/10

Eban proposes an outline for Ben-Gurion's talks with the Secretary of State, set for the following day. For the text of the memorandum, see Main Vol., pp. 295–97.

Notes

1. See No. 170 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See Nos. 68, 72, 138 and 156.
3. See No. 85.

Editorial Note

Security Council Resolution Calling for a Cease-fire between Israel and Syria

The Security Council devoted several meetings to deliberating the protracted conflict between Israel and Syria. The Council had before it several complaints, starting with the al-Hamma incident (see Editorial Note, pp. 95–96, No. 107, n. 3, and No. 168) and ending with the Tel al-Mutilla clash (see Editorial Note, p. 119, and No. 159), along with

several reports by the head of UNTSO. At the Council meetings of 17 April, 25 April and 2 May, the disputants presented their views on the status of the demilitarized zone and the factors that had caused the situation to deteriorate. The head of UNTSO also gave his opinion, but no draft resolution was brought to the Council. (See Nos. 136 and 142.) Israel's complaint concerning Tel al-Mutilla was discussed at the meeting of 8 May. The three Western powers tabled a draft cease-fire resolution. The disputants presented their positions, each blaming the other for the escalation of tension in the area. Israel and Syria presented amendments to the resolution during the meeting: Israel proposed that Syria be explicitly ordered to remove its forces from the demilitarized zone, while Syria advocated a directive permitting the repatriation of Arabs to the zone. Both sides withdrew their proposals before the meeting adjourned. (See No. 201 and n. 1 *ibid.*) The Council approved by majority vote (10), with the Soviet Union abstaining, the following resolution (S/2130):

"The Security Council,

"1. Recalling its resolutions of 15 July 1948, 11 August 1949, 17 November 1950;

"2. Noting with concern that fighting has broken out in and around the demilitarized zone established by the Syria-Israel General Armistice Agreement of 20 July 1949, and that fighting is continuing despite the cease-fire order of the Acting Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization issued on 4 May 1951;

"3. Calls upon the parties or persons in the areas concerned to cease fighting, and brings to the attention of the parties their obligations under Article 2, paragraph 4 of the Charter of the United Nations and the Security Council resolution of 15 July 1948 and their commitments under the General Armistice agreement, and accordingly calls upon them to comply with these obligations and commitments."

(See *SCOR, Sixth Year,* 541st Meeting, 17 April 1951; 542nd Meeting, 25 April 1951, pp. 1–34; 544th Meeting, 2 May 1951, pp. 1–26; 545th Meeting, 8 May 1951, pp. 1–33.) An interim resolution on a cease-fire did not bring the debate on the dispute to an end; the Council devoted two more meetings (16 May and 18 May) to the issue (see Nos. 172, 174 and 177), finally adopting its resolution. (See Editorial Note, p. 140.)

163. M. Sharett to B. L. De Ridder. 8 May 1951

Notes

1. De Ridder submitted to the representatives of Israel and Syria several proposals meant to alleviate tension in the demilitarized zone (130.02/2423/7). They are discussed in this letter.

2. See No. 159.
3. See Editorial Note above.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 119.

164. G. Avner [Tel Aviv] to M. Sharett. 8 May 1951

Memorandum: 130.02/2433/7

Avner reports on information provided him by the French minister at a dinner given by the Italian minister. (1) The French minister said that his talk with Sharett and Avner, and the general atmosphere in Israel, gave him the impression that Israel expected France to exert vigorous influence on Damascus to bring the aggression to a halt. He forwarded this demand to the Quai d'Orsay. He thought something would be done in this matter, but felt obliged to warn that France's influence was limited. He stressed that France had absolutely no interest in seeing the border dispute continue. (2) The French minister described a consultation held in Tel Aviv on 7 May between representatives of the Three Powers concerning action to settle the Israel-Syria dispute and about the expected Security Council resolution. After exchanging information, the participants reached a decision on the following conclusions that would be forwarded to the Western capitals: (a) Israel's claims are just. Its present political policy is moderate, prudent, and defensible. (b) Israel's demand for vigorous intervention in Syria should be forwarded to the Western capitals. (c) The dispute blatantly illustrates how necessary it is for the Powers to take wider and coordinated action in order to stabilize the situation between Israel and her neighbours. (d) The participants support the U.N. views about the need to modify the U.N. organs so as to enhance the organization's authority. The Armistice Commissions are able to solve small local problems, but are not sufficient when serious political disputes erupt between states. (e) The envoys exchanged information on the prospects for peace between the sides, and concluded that the goal is impractical even in the case of Israel and Jordan. (f) In view of the situation, the three envoys decided to suggest that the Three Powers attempt, on the basis of their 1950 declaration,[1] to obtain a clear commitment from Israel and the Arabs on two points: to refrain from modifying the present borders by force, and to maintain stability and peace in the area. The envoys decided to forward their conclusions to the various capitals as a recommendation for study by their governments.

Note

1. See Vol. 5, No. 248.

165. G. Avner [Tel Aviv] to G. Rafael (New York). 8 May 1951

Copy: 130.02/2433/7

Avner replies to Rafael's telegram.[1] In his cable, Rafael had intimated that he believed France was behind the Syria-Israel dispute, that France had provoked the dispute, and could end it by using its influence on Damascus. Avner rejects this assumption. He agrees that the French prefer not to clash with the Syrians, even should they be convinced that Israel was in the right. It is true that they have sided with the Syrians on the border dispute itself, but this does not mean that they urged the Syrians to act or even to press any immediate claim on the matter. When the dispute first erupted, the French willingly joined the Powers in denouncing Israel for the bombing of al-Hamma, and spoke at length about Israel's treatment of the French officer in the Armistice Commission.[2] However, after the facts of the case led them to have second thoughts, they maintained silence. Avner agrees that there are grounds for trying to influence the French to pressure Damascus, but he believes no vigorous intervention on their part is to be expected. At the most, he says, they will advise the Syrians to be careful. Avner does agree that an attempt should be made to have the French U.N. officers removed from the Israel-Syria Armistice Commission in view of Israel's experience with them, but does not believe it necessary to jump to the broad conclusion that France created the dispute and is the party capable of ending it.

Notes

1. In File 93.01/2203/7.
2. See No. 119.

166. United States Division to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations (Telegram). 8 May 1951

Notes

1. The talk took place on 7 May; see Bendor's report, 11 May 1951, 130.02/2433/6.

2. See No. 159.
3. See Vol. 5, No. 248.

167. M. Fischer to M. Sharett (Telegram). 8 May 1951

Note

1. Jacques-Emile Paris.

168. E. Elath to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Telegram). 9 May 1951

Notes

1. No. 158.
2. See No. 107, n. 2, and No. 108.
3. According to Bowker's report, Elath had solicited Britain's intervention on the basis of the Three Powers' declaration of May 1950. Even though the British Foreign Office did not believe the circumstances of the Hula dispute warranted its implementation, the British Ambassador in Damascus met the Prime Minister of Syria and offered his government's good offices in reducing the tension. (See Bowker's report, 9 May 1951; memorandum by Wardrop, 10 May 1951; telegram from the British Embassy in Syria to the British Foreign Office, 10 May 1951, PRO, FO371/91357.) See also No. 181.

169. E. Sasson (Ankara) to M. Sharett. 11 May 1951

Copy: 130.15/2570/7

Sasson replies to Sharett's letter of 16 April.[1] He expresses satisfaction at Sharett's quick and positive reply to his proposal for a consultation in Paris.[2] In view of Sharett's reply, Sasson wishes to clarify several points in his letter. He emphasizes that by expressing delight at the attitude of several Foreign Ministry personnel towards the Arab problem, he had not meant to accuse the Ministry's top officials of disinterest, unwillingness, or lack of effort to break the ice with the Arab world. Rather, he meant to note two important facts: (a) Several Foreign Ministry staff members, including Eytan, Divon, Shiloah, and others, believe, as he does, that Israel should again revive the initiative in relation to the Arabs. (b) He is pleased to hear that the Ministry's senior staff, despite their preoccupation with routine matters, are willing to consider whether there are grounds for an initiative on the Arab front and whether there is justification for changing the

basic attitudes towards the Arab problem.

As for Sharett's assertion that no practical proposal from the Arab front had been left unexamined, Sasson comments that he thinks little of the Foreign Ministry's habit of sitting back and waiting for proposals. It leads not only to a loss of momentum and missing of opportunities, but causes a sensation of "treading water" and resignation as well. He demonstrates his position with two examples: (a) The relations recently established with Elias Rababi,[3] who had tried to make contact with Israel three years previously and was turned away at that time. Sasson criticizes the delay, adding that even the present willingness to make contact with him is not a good augury. In the absence of a clear plan of action, policy-makers are liable to misread the situation, settling for relations with him only and neglecting other contacts. His affiliation with a certain faction in Lebanon is liable to lead Israel astray. (b) Sharett's aborted meeting with the Egyptian Foreign Minister.[4] Sasson claims that such crucial meetings should not be held in the absence of preparations and when the atmosphere is "crackling with tension". Israel, he asserts, loses prestige when it seeks to meet the Egyptian Foreign Minister and is turned down.

These two examples lead Sasson to conclude that it is not always desirable to act on any practical proposal, even one with a kernel of substance, and that practical proposals are several times more valuable when they complement a clearly enunciated plan. Sasson re-emphasizes that he had proposed the [European] consultation in order to free the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from "random activity" and to bring about the phrasing of a comprehensive plan of action on the Arab front. Such a plan would not be confined to Transjordan alone; it would help effect a basic transformation of the Arab problem. Sasson praises Shiloah's efforts to reach an agreement with Jordan, but stresses that Jordan is not the only Arab country, and that Israel must draw up plans and also act in relation to other Arab states. Sasson expresses his doubts about statements analysing the situation in this or that Arab country, stressing that one should not rely on informational material on truly fateful matters. Actual contacts have frequently disproved conclusions made by the authors of the reports. The same holds true for assessments by foreigners who have been in touch with the Arabs; they do not always grasp the situation correctly.

Notes

1. See No. 144.
2. *Ibid.*, n. 1.
3. See Vol. 5, No. 471.
4. See Vol. 5, No. 480.

170. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 12 May 1951

Notes

1. Reference is to Ben-Gurion's meeting with Acheson on 8 May 1951. Ben-Gurion apprised the Secretary of State of the main points appearing in No. 162. In response to his statement concerning the urgency of deliveries of raw materials to Israel, the Secretary of State pointed to the world crisis arising from the lack of raw materials and the need to resolve this matter on an international level. As for Middle East peace, Acheson expressed his hope that Israel would cooperate with the armistice system in settling its dispute with Syria. (See *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 667–70.) Ben-Gurion was disappointed with the talk, particularly with Acheson's chilly, dispassionate attitude towards him and Israel. This was also the thrust of his report on the conversation to the government on 13 June 1951.
2. Ben-Gurion met Harriman twice while in the United States. He was highly impressed by Harriman's personality and friendly attitude to Israel. When Ben-Gurion brought up the question of German reparations, Harriman promised to make inquiries (review of government meeting, 13 June 1951).
3. See Horowitz' memorandum to Eban, 11 May 1951, 93.08/344/15.

171. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 13 May 1951

Note

1. On the preparations for the meeting, see No. 109. The meeting took place on 19 April 1951. For detailed report, see Fischer to Avner, 3 May 1951, 130.10/2543/4.

172. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 15 May 1951

Notes

1. Error in the original: should read 694Y. Following the parliamentary question in the Committee for Foreign and Security Affairs concerning Eban's decision to present a draft amendment to the Security Council resolution, which he eventually had to withdraw (see Editorial Note, pp. 125–26), Sharett asked Eban to clarify the considerations that had guided him in his decision (13 May 1951, 130.09/2330/1).
2. Eban protested to McGhee about the Armistice Commission Chairman's order of 12 May to cease all drainage work in the demilitarized zone at once, and not to resume it until the dispute was resolved. Eban pointed out that the Israel government was not empowered to order the Israel Land Development Company to stop work, and that no Israeli government could take such a decision without risking serious domestic difficulties. He expressed the hope that the Security Council would not try to interfere in the matter, and that the United States would not take a position that might impair its relations with Israel. In reply, McGhee said that the State Department viewed the Hula drainage project favourably, but was opposed to carrying out

work in the absence of an agreed-upon arrangement obtained through the Chairman of the Armistice Commission. He hoped Israel would not refuse to comply with the Security Council resolution, and upheld the Council's authority to intervene in the dispute. (See Eban's telegram to Sharett, W19, 15 May 1951, 93.01/2207/17; cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 684–86.)

3. The same day, Eban wired to Sharett the following: P[rime] M[inister] confirms absolute necessity take negative line any direction cease work" (Telegram W20, 15 May 1951, 93.01/2207/17).

173. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 15 May 1951

Notes

1. Reference is to a draft resolution that the United States was about to present in concert with France, Turkey and Great Britain to the Security Council at its meeting of 16 May. The proposal, forwarded to Israel's representatives on 17 May, included several provisions that aroused concern, including an order to stop the work in the Hula, censure of Israel for the Tel al-Mutilla action, and the repatriation of Arabs expelled from the demilitarized zone. The proposal is archived in File 93.03/3008/3; cf. resolution in Editorial Note, p. 140. See also No. 177.
2. Lourie reported to Sharett on his informal talks in the U.N. with Bunche, with the deputy U.S. representative, and the British representative. His talks led him to conclude that the U.S. was responsible for the latest Security Council initiative (Telegram X41, 15 May 1951, 93.01/2203/7).
3. See No. 176.
4. Cf. No. 195 and n. 3 *ibid.*

174. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 15 May 1951

Note

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140, and Nos. 172 and 173.

175. A. Eban to the United States Division (Telegram). 15 May 1951

Note

1. *Sic.* Reference is to John. W. McCormack, Majority Leader in the U.S. House of Representatives (Democrat, Massachusetts).

176. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 16 May 1951

Note

1. Cf. No. 173 and n. 1 *ibid.*

177. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 16 May 1951

Notes

1. Eban reported on the Security Council meeting of 16 May. See Editorial Notes, pp. 125–26 and 140.
2. See No. 141, n. 2.
3. Cf. No. 171 on the German reparations debate.
4. See No. 184 and n. 1 *ibid.*

178. United States Division to the Israel Embassy in Washington (Telegram). 17 May 1951

Notes

1. Milton Fried, labour attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Israel.
2. See No. 173, n. 1.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 163.
4. A full report on the conversation appears in Bendor to the Israel Embassy in the United States, 18 May 1951, 93.08/338/10; cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 686–87.

Editorial Note

Press Release by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Dispatch of Iraqi Military Forces to Syria

On 17 May Sharett apprised the press of Israel's response to the dispatch of Iraqi military forces to Syria. Sharett said that the troop movements presented grave problems. Israel had signed an armistice agreement with Syria within its present borders, and not when its back door was open to reinforcements from Iraq, which had fought in the war against Israel but refused to sign an armistice with it. Sharett made it clear that should it become evident that the Iraqi forces were earmarked for an offensive against Israel, Israel would be forced — and legitimately so—to counteract the threat by all legal means at its

disposal. Allowing Iraqi forces to operate on Syrian soil in order to threaten Israel was a grave Syrian violation of the Armistice Agreement, which necessitated alertness on Israel's part. This deployment of forces, Sharett added, was a bad augury for the resolution presented by the Western powers in the Security Council. He attacked the phrasing of the resolution, charging that it stemmed from a false belief that the Council had to look as if it were "doing something", and was based on a misreading of the Armistice Agreement. Instead of implementing the armistice system, he continued, the resolution as phrased strengthened those who aspired to undermine it by means of violence and trickery.

179. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 17 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 173, n. 1. Israel proposed three amendments: (1) replacing Paragraphs 3, 4, and 5, which called for a moratorium on work in the Hula, with an inquiry, with the head of UNTSO proposing a settlement for compensating Arab landowners in the zone; (2) replacing Paragraph 9, which condemned Israel for bombing al-Hamma on 5 April, with one calling the Council's attention to the Israel representative's apology for the action in the Security Council on 25 April; (3) replacement of the proposal allowing the Arabs to return to the demilitarized zone (Paragraph 10) with an alternative proposal under which the matter would be examined by the head of UNTSO. The Americans refused to incorporate these Israeli proposals into their resolution. See proposed amendments in document attached to the draft resolution of 16 May 1951 in File 93.03/3008/3; cf. resolution as approved, Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. See No. 176.
3. Iraq was providing Syria with military aid in the form of aircraft and anti-aircraft batteries, sent at Syria's request after an Iraqi military delegation had visited Syria. (See Editorial Note above.)
4. See Vol. 5, No. 248.
5. Three words are omitted here.

180. M. Comay to E. Elath (Telegram). 17 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 173, n. 1.
2. See Helm's telegram to the Foreign Office, 17 May 1951, PRO, FO371/91376.
3. In accordance with instructions, Elath met Younger and sought Britain's support for Israel's proposed amendment to the Security Council draft resolution. He turned down Younger's request that Israel agree to stop drainage work until the tension

ebbed, and insisted on Israel's sovereign prerogatives in the area. Younger steered clear of any commitment, but expressed his wish to help and promised to get in touch immediately with the British representative at the United Nations. Elath believed that the initiative for British support of the U.S. draft resolution had come from the British delegation to the U.N., and that it had the backing of the Foreign Office, which was interested in coordinating Middle East policy with the United States. (Elath's telegram to Foreign Ministry, LI488, 18 May 1951, 130.09/2318/8.)

4. See No. 178.

181. E. Elath to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Telegram). 17 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 168 and n. 3 *ibid.*
2. See Vol. 5, No. 238.
3. Representatives of Britain and France were meeting in Paris at the time to discuss Middle East problems.
4. No. 180.
5. See No. 179, n. 3.
6. See No. 138.

182. Z. Argaman (Moscow) to A. Levavi. 17 May 1951

Copy: 130.11/2511/6

Argaman reports on a conversation with the Chinese ambassador in Moscow. The two discussed issues of peace. The Chinese ambassador refrained as much as possible from disclosing anything of China's view concerning a solution in Korea. He reiterated the fact that all over the world the masses wanted peace and only the ruling circles, particularly in America, were preparing a new world war. He attacked Truman, accusing him of doing the will of the capitalists, pushing rearmament and warmongering. He said that the peace movement was rapidly penetrating all strata of the public in many countries and was influencing the masses to oppose war. Argaman commented that in many countries the peace movement was regarded as a vehicle of Soviet propaganda and not as a movement aimed at preserving peace. The Chinese diplomat replied that it was true that this movement was founded and run largely by Communists, but this should not be surprising because peace and Communism are one and the same.

Argaman called the ambassador's attention to the Israeli proposal for a cease-fire in Korea[2] and asked why the Chinese had not supported it. The ambassador replied that the Americans would not leave Korea of their own free will and would not meet the conditions of a phased withdrawal of their forces as specified in the proposal. The Korean people had no faith in the Americans and would fight until they had removed the aggressor from their country. By contrast, the Chinese had presented proposals for genuine peace in Korea based on immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces. Later in the conversation the Chinese diplomat asked many questions about events in Israel and admitted that he knew little about the country. He displayed avid interest in the kibbutz method of rural settlement and found it hard to believe that kibbutz members do not use money in their daily lives. Several days later the Chinese ambassador paid Argaman a return visit. The conversation did not concern political affairs.

Notes

1. Valerian Zorin, Soviet Joint Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 15.

183. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 18 May 1951

Orig.: 93.08/338/10

Bendor reports on a State Department message transmitted to him by Keeler of the American Embassy on 16 May. Keeler said that the U.S. government hoped that Israel would support the draft resolution about to be adopted in the U.N. Political Committee on 17 May concerning a strategic quarantine of the Chinese and North Korean Communists.

On 17 May, Bendor reported to Keeler that instructions had been sent to Israel's representatives at the U.N. to vote in favour of the aforementioned draft resolution.

Note

1. See No. 178.

184. President Weizmann to President Truman (Telegram). 18 May 1951

Notes

1. This telegram was sent to Sharett on Ben-Gurion's orders and conformed with the phrasing Ben-Gurion proposed. (See telegram W35, 17 May 1951, 93.01/2207/17.)
2. See No. 187, n. 1, and No. 177.
3. President Truman forwarded the telegram to the Secretary of State, asking Acheson to draw up a draft response and attaching a comment to the effect that he knew nothing about the situation. (See *FRUS*, 1951, V, p. 689.) Truman's reply appears in No. 206.

185. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 18 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 173, n. 1.
2. Reference is to Kibbutz Ein Gev, of which Teddy Kollek was a member at the time.
3. Reference is to the cease-fire agreement obtained in an unofficial meeting of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission on 11 May 1951, based on the Security Council resolution of 8 May. Israel's representatives signed the agreement, but the Syrian representatives refused on the grounds that an official agreement could not be signed in an unofficial meeting; they requested that the signing be postponed until De Ridder's meeting with the Syrian Minister of Defence. (See report dated 11 May 1951 and Middle East Division memorandum, 13 May 1951, 130.02/2433/8.)

186. Z. Argaman (Moscow) to W. Eytan. 18 May 1951

Coded Tel. PI664; Inc.: 130.09/2325/6

In reply to Eytan's telegram,[1] Argaman reports that he had visited Shchiborin and explained matters to him as Eytan had instructed him in the previous telegram.[2] Argaman expressed confidence that the Soviet Union's stance was compatible with Israel's, and asked Shchiborin to have the Soviet delegate to the Security Council oppose the Western motion on the Hula issue. He added that because time was short the Soviet representative could perhaps call for a postponement to allow further study of the proposal. Shchiborin asked what information Argaman had concerning the proposal's prospects, and whether his visit was motivated by explicit instructions from Israel. Argaman admitted that he had received an explicit instruction to meet him. Shchiborin promised to report immediately about the visit and the request. He was very friendly.[3]

Notes

1. Eytan instructed Argaman to explain to the Soviet Foreign Ministry Israel's opposition to the Security Council draft resolution, and to try to propose that the Soviets request "a further postponement of the vote for study and clarification" (LIP508, 17 May 1951, 130.09/2325/5).
2. Untraced.
3. Further details appear in Argaman to Levavi, 1 June 1951, 130.11/2492/16.

187. M. Ishai (Belgrade) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 18 May 1951

Coded Tel. JU81; Inc.: 130.09/2298/8

In reply to Eytan's telegram,[1] Ishai reports on his talk with the Yugoslav first deputy foreign minister concerning the Security Council draft resolution.[2] The deputy minister said that the Yugoslav representatives had received instructions a week previously: (a) to support Israel's approach on the matter of draining the Hula; (b) to vote against Israel on the section pertaining to the complaint by the U.N. observers about the prevention of their activity, bombing of al-Hamma, and return of the Arabs. Ishai objected to the Yugoslav deputy minister's explanation that because of the possibility of complications with its neighbours Yugoslavia had to vote against Israel on part of the draft. He claimed that Yugoslavia's situation does not justify portraying the Syrians as being in the right and that a resolution against Israel would not further the cause of world peace. The deputy minister promised to transmit Ishai's comments, but made it clear that the previous instructions had been given by virtue of a government decision so that any modification would require its consent. He offered two possibilities for modifications: (a) that alongside mention of the bombardment Syria would also be blamed for opening fire; (b) amending the text of the resolution so that its principal import would be establishing peace, and all the assertions made against Israel would serve as a basis for this.

Notes

1. Untraced, but the reference is presumably to instructions to solicit Yugoslav Foreign Ministry action against the Security Council draft resolution. (See Avner to Israel Missions abroad, 21 May 1951, 130.10/2515/1.)
2. See No. 173, n. 1.

188. M. Comay to A. Eban. 18 May 1951

Notes

1. Reference is to the award of territorial compensation to Arabs for lands occupied by Israel and not included in the partition plan. See Vol. 4, No. 36, n. 1.
2. See Vol. 4, Editorial Note, pp. 50–51.
3. See No. 131, n. 1.

189. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to M. Fischer (Paris). 18 May 1951

Coded Tel. TP162; Outg.:130.09/2344/9

In reply to Fischer's telegram,[1] Avner notifies him that no change whatsoever has occurred in Israel's position on Greater Syria. Israel objects to the plan out of clear security considerations. It prefers two neighbouring weak states to a unified state with a unified army on its borders. He directed Fischer to continue explaining Israel's opposition and to add to his explanation the following points: (a) A union of Syria and Iraq would alter the balance of power in the Middle East. The armistice agreements are founded on the 1949 balance of power. Any sudden change in the balance would raise a question about the basic assumptions underlying the armistice agreements. (b) The dispute with Syria shows that the entire armistice system is unstable. A decisive change in the balance of power would undermine the system of armistice agreements and would not contribute to that regional stability that the Western powers so regularly acclaim. (c) It is hard to predict Jordan's reaction to the union, but one that would upset the area even more is possible. (d) The idea that the West would find it easier to deal with a unified state than with two separate states is incorrect. The example of the Arab League shows that unification intensifies extremism and extortion directed towards others. (e) In its relations with Great Britain and Jordan, Israel has left no doubt as to its opposition towards the Greater Syria plan. (f) On this matter, Israel and France have parallel interests. The motives are different, but the aim is the same: opposition to pan-Arab trends and to the swallowing up of small states by means of political unions. The possible danger to Lebanon is clear to everyone. Israel hopes for cooperation in the international arena in its opposition to this plan.

Note

1. Fischer requested immediate authoritative instructions on Israel's position on the Syria-Iraq unification plan. He wanted to know how much opposition to the plan Israel could express to the French, "in view of considerable concern that has arisen in political circles" in Paris concerning Israel's connections with Britain (PTA165, 16 May 1951, 130.09/2344/7).

190. M. Fischer to W. Eytan (Telegram). 18 May 1951

Notes

1. See No. 179, n. 3, and Editorial Note, pp. 133–34.
2. In keeping with Eytan's instructions, Fischer presented Parodi with the following arguments against the draft resolution presented to the Security Council (No. 173, n. 1): (a) allowing the Arabs to return to the demilitarized zone was contrary to Binoche's statements to Fischer; (b) the resolution as currently worded would reward Syria for its aggression; (c) France had to consider whether Iraq's dispatch of military forces to Syria was not contrary to its own interests; (d) the draft resolution would not secure the regional stability of which Binoche spoke; (e) Israel preferred that no resolution be taken in the Security Council, but if one could not be avoided, the entire matter should be handed over to Riley, not to the Armistice Commission or its Chairman (Eytan's telegram to Fischer, TP160, 17 May 1951, 130.09/2344/9).

Editorial Note

Security Council Resolution on the Hula Dispute

On 18 May 1951, the Security Council approved by majority vote (10), with the U.S.S.R. abstaining, the following resolution, presented to the Council in draft form by the United States, France, Great Britain and Turkey on 16 May (see No. 173, n. 1; No. 177, and No. 179, n. 1).

For the full text of the resolution, see Main Volume, pp. 327–29.

191. M. Keren to M. Sharett (Telegram). 18 May 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note above.
2. See No. 179.
3. See No. 107, n. 2, and No. 120, n. 2.

192. M. Keren to M. Sharett (Telegram). 19 May 1951

Note

1. Cf. No. 184, n. 3.

193. M. Sharett to A. Lourie (Telegram). 19 May 1951

Note

1. Ben-Gurion immediately approved the proposal mentioned in the telegram; he had concurrently suggested a similar solution. (See Eban's telegram to Sharett, X50, 18 May 1951, 130.09/2330/5; and Lourie's telegram to Sharett, NY3961, 19 May 1951, 93.03/76/4.)

194. E. Sasson (Ankara) to W. Eytan. 21 May 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2433/8

Sasson reports that during the Security Council debate he had been in close contact with the Turkish Foreign Ministry. He tried to explain to the heads of the ministry the injustice Turkey was doing to Israel by supporting the draft resolution instructing Israel to cease work in the Hula.[1] His efforts were to no avail: the Turks are convinced that the stoppage of work is only temporary and will last only until General Riley succeeds in settling the dispute through negotiations with the two sides. Indeed, if the Security Council does not issue a provisional order halting the work, hostilities between Israel and the Arab countries will resume. After the resolution was adopted Sasson sent a letter to the Turkish foreign minister expressing his regret at Turkey's role in its passage and informing him of Israel's opposition to a halt in the work in the Hula Valley. Sasson attaches a copy of the letter. (See Main Volume, pp. 333–34).

Note

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140.

195. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions Abroad (Telegram). 21 May 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. In early May, the Iranian parliament nationalized oil facilities in that country, stipulating the transfer of ownership from the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company to the Iranian National Oil Company. The British government challenged the validity of the Iranian measure and embarked on a struggle to secure its prerogatives and concessions over the oil installations in Iran. The Iranian government took an extreme position, refusing to accept any solution that excluded Iranian ownership of the oil resources and installations. It turned down a British proposal for arbitration and an International Court ruling in favour of preserving the *status quo*. The United States backed Britain and attempted to help resolve the dispute, but although the two governments coordinated their positions, there was some tension between them because of British suspicions that the Americans might benefit from the situation and replace them in the dispatch of experts and ships to Iran. (See No. 244. n. 1.)
3. The Arab League, meeting in Damascus on 14–18 May, adopted the following resolutions: (a) expression of total support by the League Council for Syria's just position in the Hula dispute, readiness to stand by Syria and help it dispel the danger by all means, and a commitment to similar behaviour towards any League member faced with Zionist aggression; (b) a call by the Council for expediting implementation of the inter-Arab collective security pact; (c) a call by the Council that the chiefs of staff who had signed the pact should meet to draw up the requisite defence plans; (d) an assertion that the U.N. arrangements and resolutions had so far not helped avert the danger threatening the Arab countries, and that these countries must therefore collaborate against anyone menacing the Arab states' security. (See memorandum on inter-Arab relations and the Hula dispute, 22 May 1951, 93.03/3008/4.)
4. See No. 120, n. 2.
5. See No. 107, n. 2.

196. W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington (Telegram). 22 May 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. See No. 197.
3. See No. 185, n. 3.
4. See No. 163 and n. 1 *ibid.*

197. M. Sharett to W. E. Riley. 22 May 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140. The letter was discussed at length at a government meeting that morning. At first Sharett intended to forward it to the President of the Security Council, but Eytan suggested that it be sent to Riley in order to avoid the complications attendant on answering the Security Council in such a way as to defy its instructions. After a lengthy discussion, Eytan brought Sharett and other cabinet members around to his view.
2. See No. 196.
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 125–26, and No. 185, n. 3.

198. W. Eytan to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations (Telegram). 23 May 1951

Notes

1. No. 197.
2. 23 May 1951, 130.02/2433/8.
3. *Ibid.*
4. See report on Evron's telephone conversation with Goumard, 23 May 1951, 1515 hrs., *ibid.*
5. Sharett and Riley met on 24 May. Sharett attacked Riley for having violated the agreement they had reached. After clarifying the facts, they parted, according to Sharett, "with clear understanding" that continued work in the Israeli area of the demilitarized zone was "OK". (See Sharett's memorandum on Hula developments following the Security Council resolution, 17 June 1951, 93.03/3008/5; and Eytan's telegram to the Israel delegation in New York, TNW61, 25 May 1951, 130.09/2339/1.)
6. See No. 169.
7. Israel's representatives in New York and Washington expressed concern at the content of Eytan's telegram. They believed the United States and the United Nations would take Riley's side in any controversy between him and Israel, and cautioned against a dispute with the Security Council that would leave Israel isolated in the U.N. (telegram from the Embassy in Washington to Eytan, W58, 23 May 1951, 130.09/2309/1; Eban to Sharett, X70, 24 May 1951, 93.01/2203/7).

199. East European Division (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legation in Moscow. 23 May 1951

Coded Tel. IP510; Outg.: 130.09/2325/5

In a conversation between Eytan and Yershov on 22 May, Eytan expressed satisfaction over the Soviet Union's abstention in the Security

Council vote.[1] Eytan explained Israel's position against the resolution and called it unjust, one-sided, and rewarding aggression. He said that drainage of the Hula was essential, and that according to the Israeli interpretation Israel was not obligated to stop work on land belonging to Jews. As for land owned by the Arab residents, the Syrians have no standing in the decision. Yershov asked about Israel's attitude towards the claims of the Arabs who had been evicted from the area.

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. See No. 154, n. 3.
3. The second paragraph of the telegram, dealing with technical matters, is omitted here.

200. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 24 May 1951

Note

1. See Vol. 5, No. 248.

201. A. Eban (Washington) to the Staff of the Israel Embassy in Washington. 24 May 1951

Copy: 93.08/337/7

Eban analyzes the implications of the previous week's events at Lake Success and the resulting Security Council resolution. In his opinion, the State Department had bowed to overt Arab pressure and had deliberately and perversely harmed Israel's development, prestige, honour and good name, and security in the demilitarized zone. He makes particular reference to the State Department's *modus operandi*: they had schemed in secret and cooperated with the Arab side while excluding the Israelis from the entire process of consultations and the possibility of appealing against American policy in advance. In Eban's opinion, these events showed what deep roots the idea of appeasing the Arabs had struck in the State Department; it had decided to purchase a respite from the spate of anti-Western ire at Israel's expense. State Department attitude towards Israel was apparent in other areas too, such as financial and military aid. Eban believes that this was no

isolated event or transitory phenomenon and suggests that Israel make contingency plans. He proposes anticipating the growing danger of pro-Arab appeasement within the State Department by mobilizing American Jewry to assume political roles. He welcomes all Jewish activity expressing dissatisfaction with State Department policy. He proposes encouraging such activities and plans to establish a consultative committee of Jewish leaders to help the Embassy keep abreast of political developments in America. He sees particular urgency in recruiting prestigious writers and journalists who will be willing to advocate a positive and creative American policy for the Middle East.

Notes

1. See No. 195, nn. 2 and 3.
2. See Sharett's response in No. 249.

202. E. Elath (London) to M. Sharett. 25 May 1951

Orig.: 130.13/2593/23

Elath replies to Sharett's query concerning the conference proposed by Sasson.[1] He agrees with Sasson that the question of Israel's relations with the Arab world requires on-going study and attention. Like him, he argues that the disappointment resulting from the fact that the armistice agreements had not led to a settlement with the Arab states is insufficient reason to strike the problem from the agenda or keep it in the deep-freeze until the time is ripe. Elath also agrees that, objectively speaking, there are no encouraging indications in the Arab world heralding improved relations or a willingness for peace with Israel. Isolated declarations to this effect sounded in Egypt and Lebanon had been swallowed up in a sea of hatred and envy and have not been echoed by the Arab public at large. Even King Abdallah, who favours a settlement with Israel, is not free to do everything he pleases. The unstable world situation reinforces the influence of the extremists in the Arab camp and encourages their hope of being able to exploit the opportunities to "right wrongs". The influence of the Arab League has increased as a result of the unremitting tension in several parts of the Arab world (especially North Africa). The League, as an instrument of propaganda, is availing itself of every opportunity to keep alive and nurture Arab hatred of Israel.

Elath asserts that if Sasson were proposing a meeting on the assumption that the chances of peace are increasing, he would see no

reason to hold a meeting whose participants would simply reach the same conclusion. But the purpose of the consultations proposed by Sasson is to hold a comprehensive discussion on Israel's relations with the Arab states based on the assumption that peace is not round the corner. Sasson is proposing a discussion not only of the political and security aspects of the Arab problem but also in the context of Israel's existence within an alien and hostile world. Sasson's proposed discussion is both justified and important even if the conclusion reached is that there is nothing to be done. Elath agrees with Sasson that after three years of Israel's existence there is a need to review the situation and rethink the methods and means at Israel's disposal *vis-à-vis* the Arabs. There is a need to exchange opinions concerning the importance of the Arabs and their influence on Israel's standing in the international arena, so that the effectiveness of Israel's policy can be evaluated.

From his London experience, Elath also concludes that Israel cannot reach a full understanding with Britain as long as there is no solution to the problem of Israel's relations with its neighbours. This was the implication of Elath's conversation with Morrison before the latter's appointment as Foreign Secretary.[3]

Elath expresses his concern about the impact of recent events in Iran[4] on public opinion in the Arab world and on the behaviour of Arab governments. He fears that Israel will shortly face a more activist British policy in the Arab world aimed at strengthening its positions between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean. The Americans too will try to demonstrate their favourable intentions towards the Arabs. This climate of appeasement will first and foremost reinforce Arab aggression against Israel. Elath predicts that the borders will flare up as a result of infiltration into Israeli territory, chiefly from the Syrian and Jordanian borders. In his opinion, the Arabs will endeavour to systematically involve Western governments in the problem of regional security in order to strengthen their desire for a settlement at all costs. The Arab tactics, Elath believes, will be aimed at increasing United States and British pressure on Israel to agree to concessions concerning the refugees and border adjustments. He expresses concern over the pressure to be anticipated during the forthcoming General Assembly session.

Elath sees Israel's defeat on the Security Council resolution[5] as an expression of the negative current of thought towards Israel in Washington—and to a certain extent in London as well. In his opinion, the State Department's attitude towards Israel has not undergone any essential modification since the time of Henderson,[6] despite McGhee's attempts to maintain a balance between Israel and the Arabs. The Hula affair should serve as a warning to Israel about the essence of its relations with the State Department. Elath admits that

Israel, too, made certain errors in its conduct of the Hula struggle through hasty moves and harmful declarations.

In summary, Elath says that there is a need to clarify Israeli activity *vis-à-vis* the Arabs. In this context he suggests examining aspects of Israel's relations with Asian and North African countries as well.

Notes

1. See No. 152, n. 1.
2. See Vol. 5, Editorial Note, p. 436.
3. The conversation took place on 19 December 1950. (See report in File 93.04/36/14.)
4. See No. 195, n. 2.
5. *Sic.*
6. Loy Henderson, formerly (1945–48) Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs in the Department of State.

203. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to Y. Ilsar[1] (Rome). 27 May 1951

Copy: 130.10/2523/17

Avner, replying to Ilsar's letter of 18 May 1951, disagrees with his conclusions concerning Israel's relations with the Vatican. In his opinion, Ilsar exaggerates the importance the Vatican accords to the question of ties with Israel. On the basis of Ilsar's remarks one might think that the Vatican is devoting much time to this question. Avner does not believe this is the case. In his opinion, the Vatican relates to the Jerusalem issue only when there is some special development or in advance of a session of the General Assembly. He agrees with Ilsar that within the Vatican there are two attitudes towards Israel, but they are related only to the issue of Jerusalem and not to the general question of relations with Israel. The representatives of the moderate orientation, who are willing to compromise on a limited internationalization of Jerusalem, are more inclined to have some kind of tie with Israel, although Avner does not believe that they are truly interested in relations with Israel. Avner does not accept Ilsar's assumption that attempts are being made to lay the groundwork or to make Israel more amenable by means of articles in the Catholic press that speak of negotiations in Rome and of Israeli attempts to reach an agreement. In his opinion these are simply press items and are not dictated by higher authority.

Avner agrees with Ilsar that the Vatican is concerned about the future of Christians in Israel and that this is an important factor in its policy on Jerusalem. On this topic Avner supports a more liberal policy,

small acts that would not compromise security but would spare Israel much trouble with the Vatican.

Avner agrees that Israel should cooperate with Jordan on the issue of Jerusalem, but rejects Ilsar's proposal to set up a joint Israeli-Jordanian commission representing all the religious communities in Jerusalem to safeguard the holy places. Avner believes that the proposal is not practical and that Jordan will reject it.

Avner agrees with Ilsar's conclusion that Israel must not act precipitately and that time and conditions are working in Israel's favour. Due consideration and planning must precede any Jewish contact with the Vatican, even on Jewish issues that are unrelated to Israel. Furthermore, during periods of quiet Israel must even avoid contacts on other matters, so as not to give the impression that it is trying to sneak in through the back door. According to Avner, Jordan must be made a partner in the tactical game with the Vatican, but this manoeuvring must not involve Israel in complications. The fewer people and organizations that concern themselves with the holy places and Christians, the better it is for Israel. In conclusion, Avner suggests that Israel relate to the Vatican just as it does to any other political entity.

Notes

1. Yehiel Ilsar, First Secretary, Consul, and head of Consular Section of the Israel Legation in Rome.
2. Shraga Feivel (Favian) Herskovits, formerly Chief Rabbi of the Neolog Community in Budapest. Concerning his contacts with the Vatican, see Ilsar to Avner, 18 May 1951, 130.10/2523/17.
3. In Paragraph 4 of his memorandum, Ilsar wrote that Vatican moderates were reiterating the following at every opportunity: "(a) Official and unofficial contacts with the Vatican are essential; (b) it is possible to reach an agreement with the Vatican; (c) because the Vatican has plenty of time, Israel's representatives should take the initiative in making contact with it; (d) Israel should show a little flexibility on the Holy Places and the treatment of Christian communities in Israel; (e) Israel should allow a larger number of clergymen to enter the country, and should make their work easier in general" (*ibid.*).
4. Yehonathan Prato, official in the Political Research Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, until May 1951. From July, Second Secretary at the Israel Legation in Argentina. The appendix is omitted here.

204. East European Division (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legation in Moscow. 28 May 1951

Coded Tel. 512; Outg.: 130.09/2325/5

At a meeting with Yershov,[1] Sharett brought up the problem of the

Jews imprisoned in Rumania because of their Zionist inclinations and denied *Pravda*'s assertions that political agreements between Israel and the United States had been drawn up during Ben-Gurion's visit there. At first Yershov claimed that he was not the right address to clarify the Rumanian issue, but afterwards he entered into a discussion. As for the articles in *Pravda*, Yershov responded principally with the familiar counter-arguments. In another conversation during dinner at the foreign minister's residence, Sharett chose an appropriate moment to raise the issue of Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union.[2]

Notes

1. The talk took place at Sharett's initiative on 25 May.
2. See M. Walter to heads of Israel missions in Eastern Europe, 27 May 1951, 130.11/2513/1. The supper at Sharett's house took place on 26 May. Walter wrote that the conversation focused on immigration problems. Yershov inquired into Israel's plans for continued immigration, and took an interest in its future sources. Sharett concentrated exclusively on the Eastern European immigration potential, remarking that "One cannot help mentioning, in connection with immigration planning, one large country that is home to most Eastern European Jews. Although nothing about this problem has progressed in the past few years, Israel cannot plan its future without taking this Jewish community into account." Sharett added that even without Soviet Jewry, Israel could boost its population to over 2,000,000 in the coming two years with existing sources of immigration. Yershov then asked about immigration from the West. Sharett replied that it was extremely important in quality but still small in quantity.

205. E. Elath to M. Comay. 30 May 1951

Notes

1. Elath's telegram to Comay, 29 May 1951, 130.09/2318/8.
2. See No. 138.
3. See Nos. 68 and 72.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 118.
5. See No. 195, n. 2.
6. Muhammad Musaddeq, Prime Minister of Iran from April 1951.
7. 30 July 1951.

Editorial Note

Knesset Debate on Security Council Resolution of 18 May 1951

The Knesset devoted three meetings (29 May, 30 May, and 4 June

1951) to a debate on the Security Council resolution on the Hula. Sharett, opening the debate in his capacity as Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister, attacked the Council's resolution for being one-sided, "in both its conclusions concerning the past and the law it laid down for the future". He claimed that the evidence presented to the Council proved beyond all doubt that the Syrian army was directly responsible for the recent events. Despite this proof, the Council had condemned Israel for the Air Force reprisal bombing, completely disregarding Syrian aggression. Sharett said that the Council's demand that the Arabs be permitted to return to the demilitarized zone ignored the fact that the Arabs involved had been moved inland, away from the frontier, by their own request and of their own volition, and he strongly condemned the Council's directive to stop the drainage work in the demilitarized zone. He considered the Council's resolution a manifestation of a policy of appeasement towards the Arabs, and asserted that such a policy would not bring peace to the Middle East. Sharett referred to the Arab League resolutions in Damascus, the sole purpose of which was to fan hatred towards Israel and to prepare for war against it. In this context he made special mention of a statement by Syria's ruler after the resolution had been adopted, to the effect that "There will never be negotiations or discussion of peace with Israel".

Sharett reaffirmed that Israel's government regarded the entire demilitarized zone on the Syrian border as "an integral part of the territory over which Israel's sovereignty extends", and announced that "the government believes itself entitled to carry out the Hula reclamation project . . . as a cardinal and absolute right, and is resolutely committed to bringing this endeavour to a successful conclusion despite all difficulties and obstacles". At the same time, Sharett asserted that the government "desires to avoid unnecessary crises during the work" and would take steps to ensure that complications "that could well arise [would] not impair the armistice system", which Israel "had accepted and undertook to preserve". Sharett apprised the Knesset of the negotiations with Riley, following which the government had taken its resolution of 22 May. He enumerated the three principles of the resolution: (1) agreement to a one-day halt in drainage work in the entire demilitarized zone; (2) a brief stoppage of work on plots that were privately owned by Arabs, in order to permit the U.N. Chief of Staff to arrange matters with the owners; (3) resumption of work 24 hours later, with no further interruptions, in all other parts of the demilitarized zone.

The debate on Sharett's statement was held in an election-eve atmosphere. The opposition attacked the Foreign Minister personally and accused the government of implementing a misguided policy that

had led to the Security Council's hostile resolution, surrender to U.S. pressure, and Israel's "throwing itself into the arms of America" with unwarranted haste.

On 4 June, the Knesset summed up the debate by voting on several draft resolutions. Mapam called on the government "to resume reclamation work at full speed and scope . . . undeterred by the pressure of U.N. officials", and instructed the Knesset "to condemn the government's policy of subservience to American politics, as manifested *inter alia* . . . in its decision to halt the reclamation work". Herut proposed that the Foreign and Defence Affairs Committee be instructed to investigate the causes of the government's failure, that the government be enjoined not to accede to any order to stop work in the Hula, and that measures be taken to liberate Israel from "alien control". The General Zionists asked the Knesset to assert that "The government's policies concerning the border dispute with Syria have led to failures that have caused grievous harm to Israel's international standing." The Communists proposed that the Knesset resolve to withdraw its support for the existence of the demilitarized zones, which served as "bases for espionage and interference by American 'observers'", to retract its recognition of the Conciliation Commission and UNTSO, and to condemn the government, "which had surrendered to the decisions made by the American-British majority in the Security Council, aimed at consolidating the control of American spies along [Israel's] borders". Mapai and the Progressive Party proposed that the Knesset express its regret at the Security Council resolution, and its support of the government "in its insistence on Israeli sovereignty over the demilitarized zone, and its right to complete the reclamation project in its entirety". The Knesset rejected all the opposition resolutions, adopting the coalition motion by a majority vote with 51 in favour. (*Divrei ha-Knesset*, Third Session of First Knesset, Vol. IX, pp. 1874–87, 1893–1910, 1931–32. See also analysis of political developments and the Knesset debate in Sharett's review of "Developments in the Hula Affair Following the Security Council Resolution", 17 June 1951, 93.03/3008/5.)

206. M. B. Davis to President Weizmann. 1 June 1951

Notes

1. See No. 184.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 125–26.

207. M. Fischer (Paris) to G. Avner. 1 June 1951

Orig.: 130.10/2516/10

On his visit to the French Foreign Ministry, Fischer tried to clarify when the permit to export Mosquito planes to Israel would be released. Luc answered that he hoped the problem would be solved in the near future, provided that border incidents did not recur. He requested that Israel abandon its plan to have the planes stop over in Cyprus, in order to prevent the transaction from becoming public knowledge.

Concerning the dispute with Syria, Fischer said that France was in a position to influence a *rapprochement* between Israel and Syria. Luc answered that the Syrians could not begin talks with Israel on their own initiative, for fear of Arab public opinion. In any case, the French Foreign Ministry was concerned with the problem and was trying to find a formula that would bring the parties to the discussion table. He agreed with Fischer that should the Americans and British see eye-to-eye on Middle Eastern affairs, French interests in the region could well be endangered. In conclusion, Luc promised to inform Fischer when the French Foreign Ministry came up with a formula that could lead to a possible stabilization of relations between Israel and the Arab countries.

Notes

1. Aviezer Chelouche, Second Secretary at the Israel Legation in Paris.
2. Georges Denizeau, official in charge of Israel affairs in the Africa-Levant Department of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
3. The handwritten postscript of a personal nature at the end of the letter has been omitted here.

208. A. Lourie to M. Sharett (Telegram). 2 June 1951

Notes

1. See Nos. 196 and 198, and n. 5 *ibid.*
2. In the original, erroneously "your". Corrected according to incoming version of the telegram (130.09/2330/6).
3. 1949. See Vol. 3, No. 342.
4. No. 197.
5. S. Ramati vigorously rejected Riley's demand to stop all drainage work in the Hula for three days. (See Eytan's telegram to Lourie, Y750, 29 May 1951, 130.09/2330/1.)
6. See Editorial Note, pp. 149–51.

Editorial Note

Meeting between Sharett and Riley

The following agreement was reached at a meeting between Sharett and Riley on 3 June 1951 at the residence of President Weizmann in Rehovot, convened in the wake of renewed disagreement between U.N. representatives and Israel concerning the cessation of work in the demilitarized zone (see No. 198 and *ibid.*, n. 5; No. 208 and *ibid.*, n. 5).

During their conversation, Riley criticized Israel's treatment of the chairman of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission. He accused it of ignoring the chairman's very existence and authority by the manner in which it announced its cessation of work in the demilitarized zone (see No. 197). He claimed that, in view of the situation that had arisen, work had to be halted again in order to restore the chairman's prestige and authority. Riley agreed to Sharett's proposal that any agreement reached between them be put in writing and signed by both, while matters that did not need to be made public would be kept between the two of them. Sharett accordingly informed Riley that Israel agreed to halt work for five days. It was agreed that Riley would announce the decision and that Israel would react to his communiqué. Riley pressed Sharett to agree to a week's cessation and to advance the starting date by two days in order to dissipate the tension to be anticipated at the gathering of the Arab chiefs of staff, but Sharett was forced to reject the request. He explained to Riley that he had to take account of domestic pressures within Israel (see Editorial Note, pp. 149–51) and had in any case already jeopardized his position by agreeing to a renewed and protracted work stoppage. Sharett drew up the text of the agreement presented below and Riley initialled it. Riley kept a copy signed by Sharett. Two days later, Riley met Sharett again and proposed that it be published as an interim report to the Security Council. Sharett accepted Riley's proposal and they agreed on the text of the report that was sent to New York, where it was released on 6 June. (See Editorial Note, pp. 156–57, and Sharett's memorandum on developments in the Hula affair after the Security Council resolution, 17 June 1951, 93.03/3008/5.)

209. Agreement between W. E. Riley and M. Sharett. 3 June 1951

210. M. Fischer to G. Avner. 3 June 1951

Notes

1. Reginald James Bowker, British Assistant Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
2. See No. 217.

211. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to the Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 3 June 1951

Orig.: 130.15/2570/7

Bendor raises points concerning the problem of peace with the Arab states: (1) By all indications, Israel will be pressured to arrive at an accord with the Arabs, and this would be at Israel's expense. (2) The ideas about the accord stem from a conception which asserts that there exists a conflict between Israel and Syria which should be resolved by negotiations. (3) Israel encourages this trend of thought by stating time and again that it wishes to embark upon discussions with each of the Arab states. (4) In fact, there is no "conflict" between Israel and the Arab states. The Arab states attacked Israel, invaded its territory, and tried to wipe it off the face of the earth. Israel expelled the invaders, and, as the victor, it is Israel that should be drawing up the peace terms. (5) Israel should change from a defensive to an offensive diplomatic strategy. Bendor recommends pre-empting any pressure that may be applied to Israel by immediately preparing a draft peace treaty with each of the Arab states. This draft would emphasize what Israel is demanding from the Arab states. Far-reaching demands should be presented in order to leave room for concessions. (6) The diplomatic offensive is vital not only to pre-empt pressure by the Powers, but also to correct the widespread impression that it is Israel that perpetrated an injustice against the Arabs and should therefore recompense them for it. (7) The diplomatic offensive should replace the recurrent declarations that Israel is ready to make peace with the Arabs but they are unwilling to do so. These declarations achieve nothing and present Israel as a beggar dependent on the mercies of the Arab states.[1]

Note

1. This document was sent to Sharett for his perusal on 4 June. In his reply, he pointed

out that "we have for some time refrained from repeated declaration of our willingness for peace", but agreed that when "the Security Council condemns us and Syria in equal measure for the absence of peace, it would be stupid on our part not to slap the Security Council's face with the truth".

212. M. Amir (Brussels) to the West European Division. 3 June 1951

Orig.: 130.10/2541/13

Amir analyses the problem of relations with Spain. He notes that in the wake of the General Assembly resolution on Spain,[1] that country is rejoining the community of nations and is establishing legations in all countries; the question is whether the time has not come to examine Spain's relations with Israel, too. Amir claims that under Franco the Jews of Spain had been neither persecuted nor expelled. Even French Jews who reached Spain during the Nazi period and found refuge there were not deported. He agrees with Israel's policy that a separate political accounting is required with Germany, but not with other European countries that committed crimes against the Jews. As an example he mentions Austria, which, although it collaborated with the Germans, is treated differently by Israel. He agrees that the present regime in Austria is different, but this is true also for Germany, many of whose cabinet members were in prison or concentration camps during the Nazi period. Unlike the Nazis, Spain committed neither murder nor mass expulsion. True, its press adopted anti-Semitic slogans, but this phenomenon appeared in many other Western countries as well. Amir is concerned that neglecting relations with Spain will leave the field open for the Arabs, and he does not recommend leaving the Iberian peninsula with no Israeli representation at a time when Spain and Portugal are about to be incorporated, directly or indirectly, into the Atlantic alliance.

Summing up, Amir suggests that Israeli-Spanish relations be reexamined and that decisions be taken.[2] He does not believe that the complex problem Israel has in relation to Germany applies to Spain.[4]

Notes

1. On 4 November 1950, the United Nations General Assembly decided to repeal the diplomatic boycott of Spain and to permit its member states to establish full diplomatic ties with the Franco regime.
2. In reply, Avner wrote that the problem of relations with Spain was complicated and complex. Logic was indeed on the side of Amir, but there were "psychological com-

plexes that worked strongly in the other direction". He indicated that the domestic factor was considerable, and stressed that most of the Israeli political leadership belonged to Mapai, whose chiefs had condemned Franco's regime in the past and found it personally difficult to take a step that was tantamount to "accepting the *status quo*". He added that he would attempt to persuade his colleagues to review the situation in light of Amir's letter (8 June 1951, 130.10/2541/13).

3. Robert Schuman, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs.
4. The director of the Latin America Division, Avraham Darom, passed on to Eytan the correspondence between Amir and Avner, along with his own memorandum on Israel-Spain relations. He claimed that the time was not ripe for changing the country's Spanish policy and put forward several arguments to support his contention. In his opinion, the Soviet bloc would interpret recognition of Spain as an abandonment of Israel's policy of non-alignment. Spain was not interested in establishing ties with Israel. The Latin American countries that have not recognized Franco's regime would be disappointed by such a measure. It was doubtful whether any economic advantage would accrue to Israel from ties with Spain, and there was no harm in continuing the present situation. Eytan agreed with Darom's assessment and informed him that "there would be no change in our position on this question". (See Darom's letter to Eytan of 13 June 1951 and the attached documents in File 130.02/2413/24.)

Editorial Note

Interim report to the Security Council—6 June

On 6 June, Riley submitted to the President of the Security Council the report presented below. For the sequence of events that had preceded the drafting of the report, see Editorial Note, p. 153.

"I have the honour to submit for transmission to the President of the Security Council a further interim report on the steps taken to give effect to the Security Council resolution of 18 May 1951.

"The Government of Israel, in accordance with the request of the Chief of Staff, stopped work in the demilitarized zone at 16.30 hrs. local Israel time on 5 June 1951, pending investigation by the Chairman of the status of areas of land upon which work has been in progress. Upon completion of this investigation, the Chairman will authorize resumption of the work on land ascertained by him not to be a subject of the dispute.

"Arrangements have been made with the Government of Israel for the Chairman of the Syrian-Israel Mixed Armistice Commission to interview the Arabs who had recently been evacuated from the demilitarized zone to Sha'ab, in Israel.

"Following the completion of the interview referred to in paragraph (3), the Government of Israel has agreed that those Arabs who express their desire to return to the demilitarized zone will be permitted to do so.

"The Chairman of the Syrian-Israel Mixed Armistice Commission is examining possible ways and means of reaching an agreement with the Arab landowners in the demilitarized zone, whose lands are involved in the works project of the Palestine Land Development Company Ltd., with a view to continuing the project.

"Discussions are now in progress with regard to general supervisory powers of the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission in accordance with Article V of the General Armistice Agreement and the explanatory note reproduced in paragraph 9 of the Security Council resolution of 18 May, 1951" (U.N. Document S/2185, 130.02/2433/9).

213. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 7 June 1951

Orig.: 93.08/339/5

Bendor reports on several talks he had with the American ambassador: on 1 and 5 June in the ambassador's residence and on 4 June at the home of the French ambassador. On these three occasions the ambassador developed the American "line of defence". He said that the Israeli public had been incited against the United States as one of the countries that had proposed the Security Council draft resolution on the Hula question.[2] The Israeli public's resentment was not justified. The resolution assures Israel that it could complete its drainage of the Hula. The powers that had submitted the draft resolution were friendly to Israel and it was out of the question that they were seeking Israel's downfall. It should be understood that resentment had built up against Israel because of its refusal to comply with Riley's request to cease work. Since no one could understand why Israel had not cooperated with Riley, the whole issue had been interpreted as contempt of the United Nations. This opinion was further corroborated by the bombing of al-Hamma and by certain statements that had been made.[3] It was this resentment which had led to the drafting of a resolution at a time when Israel's actions were already known, whereas Syria's actions were as yet unknown. Concerning Israel's claim that the Security Council resolution had increased Syria's arrogance and had stirred general unrest in the entire region, the ambassador said that all this had been the case even before the Security Council resolution. The four countries that had initiated the resolution would not refrain from taking appropriate steps in reaction to any attempt at aggression by either side. In the final analysis, Israel must understand that U.N. faith in Israel had been undermined and this had found expression in the draft resolution. He added that he, too, would have

preferred a resolution that was more explicit concerning Syria's aggression in the area of Tel al-Mutilla.

Bendor explained Israel's position and the effects of the resolution on Israel's domestic situation and on unrest in the Arab countries. He pointed in particular to the surprising decisions by the chairman of the Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commission, indicative of a tendency to appease the Arabs. The ambassador rejected this line of argument and said that the coming months would prove that there was no basis to justify such a frame of mind.

Notes

1. See No. 206.
2. See also No. 173 and n. 1 *ibid.*, and Editorial Note, p. 140.
3. See No. 120, n. 2.
4. The reference here is to two anti-Israel resolutions that were adopted on 30 May concerning complaints by Egypt on the evacuation of about a thousand Arab residents of Majdal and the expulsion of about 5,000 Azzazmeh tribesmen to Sinai. Egypt's complaints were submitted to the Armistice Commission already in late 1950, and were even discussed in the Security Council. Israel rejected them on the grounds that the Arabs of Majdal had left of their own free will, and that the Azzazmeh tribesmen were infiltrators sent by Egypt to penetrate Israel's borders (see Vol. 5, No. 387, n. 1, and Editorial Note, pp. 593–94). In the Commission's sessions of early 1951, the chairman of the Commission refrained from arbitrating between Israel and Egypt. On 30 May, the chairman unexpectedly supported a resolution in favour of Egypt. The Commission decided that 2,000 Arabs of Majdal should be allowed to return and their property be restored, and also that 7,000 tribesmen who had been expelled to Sinai should be repatriated forthwith.

   Israel protested against these resolutions but to no effect. (See report of the Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commission, 30 May 1951, and also File 130.02/2436/6 for additional background material.)

214. M. Comay to A. Lourie. 7 June 1951

Note

1. Cf. the report on the conversation in *FRUS*, V, 1951, pp. 704–706.

215. Meeting: M. Sharett–H. Hoskins[1] (9 June 1951)

Report[2]: 130.02/2441/4

Hoskins, accompanied by U.S. Ambassador Davis, visited Sharett at his home. Hoskins began with a declaration of his position towards Israel. He admitted that he had once been counted among the oppo-

nents of Zionism, but since Israel had become an established fact he accepted it totally, and only wanted to help improve its relations with its neighbours. Hoskins came to Israel after visiting Asian and Mid-East countries. Sharett asked whether he had met with any manifestation of a desire for peace in the Arab capitals. Hoskins answered in the negative, adding that enmity towards Israel was unabated and that old prejudices predominated. Mass immigration to Israel was increasing fears of Israeli expansion. Sharett replied that even without the mass immigration the Arab rulers would find some pretext for inciting the masses against Israel. He also claimed that it was hard to resolve the contradiction between Arab fears of Israeli expansion and their refusal to make a peace that would stabilize the borders and constitute a guarantee against aggression and invasion. Hoskins asserted that Israel had to take steps that would defuse the tension somewhat and lay the emotional groundwork for a different attitude towards Israel. Sharett cast doubt on the effectiveness of conciliatory measures initiated by Israel. He said that he had long since stopped making declarations about Israel's desire for peace because he had come to realize that they were taken as a sign of weakness, making peace more remote instead of bringing it nearer.

Sharett's interlocutors brought up the refugee question in the context of Sharett's conversation with Palmer.[4] Sharett said that the question was whether the arrangement proposed by Palmer and Barco would serve as a bridge to peace or as another barrier to its achievement. He presented Israel's reservations on the one hand, and its willingness to explore the possibilities of a refugee settlement on the other. Sharett arranged for Hoskins to meet the Prime Minister as well.[5]

Notes

1. Harold B. Hoskins, Consultant to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs.
2. The report printed below is from Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 300, 26 June 1951.
3. Charles H. Malik, Lebanese minister to the United States and representative at the U.N.
4. See No. 214.
5. See report on Hoskins' conversations in Israel in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 710–712.

216. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to Y. Yadin. 11 June 1951

Copy: IMDEA 128.81/47

Sharett replies to Yadin's complaints about the Foreign Ministry's

handling of the Hula problem, as expressed in Yadin's memorandum of 7 June[1]: (1) Sharett claims that Yadin's disgruntlement was unjustified and that he was failing to distinguish properly between the military and the diplomatic stages. (2) The Hula affair extended beyond the bounds of an ordinary conflict and had become a major diplomatic problem. It was debated by the Security Council and had worldwide repercussions. The country's stature and international relations had been harmed. (3) During all these weeks there has been close contact between Sharett and Yadin's advisers. Sharett argues that he was aware of Yadin's viewpoint and that he had reason to assume that his own attitude—to refrain from any overt clash with the U.N. chief of staff—was likewise known to Yadin. When it became imperative to take a decision, Sharett had seen no grounds for delay until after additional consultations with Yadin, which would have produced nothing new. (4) Sharett rejects the procedure proposed by Yadin, whereby an I.D.F. representative would participate in any meeting between Foreign Ministry and U.N. personnel dealing with armistice matters. He agrees that staff officers should participate if the deliberations touch upon military problems, but if the topics are political there is no need for the presence of military representatives so long as their position is known in advance. According to Sharett, this has been the customary procedure since the inception of U.N. involvement in Palestine and there is no reason to change it under pressure of recent events. (5) With regard to the conflict itself, Sharett stresses the importance of attaining a practical agreement with the U.N. chief of staff while guaranteeing Israel's prerogatives. He expects the Hula issue to be referred back to the Security Council, and, in his view, it is preferable that Israel be able to argue that it had complied with the Security Council resolution of 18 May,[2] rather than find itself in a head-on collision with the U.N. chief of staff. At this stage, Israel should strive to establish a common front with General Riley. (6) Sharett justifies his decision to agree to a work stoppage for several days, as proposed by Riley. (7) As for the return of the Arabs of Sha'ab, Sharett concedes that Israel had at first agreed to the condition proposed by Riley, namely, that the meeting between the observers and the Arabs be held in the presence of Israeli army and police officers, and that civilian officials participate as well. However, there was no intention of bringing matters to a head and Israel was prepared to waive the presence of civilian officials if this proved necessary. In Sharett's view, the return of the Sha'ab Arabs is a political problem, so that any intransigence would place Israel in an untenable situation *vis-à-vis* the Security Council. The concession in this matter was necessary, and it would have been better to make it earlier. (8) Sharett disagrees with Yadin's assumption that a concession made in the absence of military personnel undermined their position. He argues that the Foreign Ministry's intervention usually occurs at an

advanced stage of the negotiations, and that it is natural that in these circumstances it adopts a position different from that taken by the military during the initial stage of the inquiry. (9) Summing up, Sharett asserts that the line adopted by the Foreign Ministry in the final stage of the negotiations with Riley is the outcome of a great deal of thought and should be viewed as a tactical manoeuvre aimed at achieving a specific purpose. The goal is to create a more comfortable background for Israel in anticipation of the second round of the struggle in the Security Council, and to effect a gradual improvement in the political atmosphere surrounding the Hula conflict, on the assumption that this will drag on for quite some time. Sharett reminds Yadin that at the time when Israel faced direct military assaults and threats from the Syrians he had wholeheartedly approved operations of the most vigorous kind. When, however, Israel is facing problems with a clearly political sting, a large measure of flexibility and patience is called for.

Notes

1. Yadin resented several decisions and steps taken by Sharett without consulting him. He pointed in particular to Sharett's agreement with Riley to halt work in the demilitarized zone for five days and his agreement that U.N. observers could visit the Arabs of Sha'ab without an Israeli escort (see No. 209). Yadin explained that "these concessions could well lead to a reduction in the practical achievements" gained in the area, especially the meeting with the Arabs of Sha'ab, which would merely be the occasion for another report by Riley condemning Israel's behaviour towards the Arabs. Yadin added that "the method adopted recently, that of discussing all these matters directly with General Riley", without his presence or the presence of I.D.F. representatives, "has set to naught the entire structure we built over recent years in connection with the armistice apparatus." Yadin wrote that the United Nations had realized "that there is an easy shortcut to obtaining concessions when Israel's military representatives stand adamant", and that in the situation that had been created the Army "could not be in active contact with the observers for fear that the Foreign Ministry—without the Army's knowledge—might give another response." At the end of his statement, Yadin complained of the slighting way in which documents were brought to his attention (Yadin to Sharett, 7 June 1951, IMDEA, 128.81/47).
2. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
3. The document has not been traced, but see No. 196.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 153, and No. 209.

217. G. Avner to M. Fischer. 11 June 1951

Notes

1. See No. 207 and 210.

2. See Avner to Fischer, 8 June 1951, 93.02/163/10.
3. The reference is apparently to the meeting between Makleff and Shishakli on 26 March. See No. 95.

218. G. Marshall to D. Ben-Gurion. 12 June 1951

Notes

1. A farewell letter of the same date from Ben-Gurion to President Truman, on the day he left New York, is found in the Foreign Ministry files (93.08/337/2). Ben-Gurion seems to have sent a similar letter to George Marshall.
2. See No. 156.

Editorial Note

Riley's Ruling on the Egyptian blockade of the Suez Canal—12 June

On 12 June, Riley submitted his ruling to the special Israeli-Egyptian committee discussing the blockade of the Suez Canal. For the full text of the ruling, see Main Volume, pp. 375–77.

219. S. Ramati to M. Makleff. 13 June 1951

Note

1. A copy of the letter was sent to Sharett, who wanted an urgent consultation with Shiloah. He wrote to him that "just saying no is not so easy" and that "the Prime Minister's opinion must also be sought" (14 June 1951, 130.02/2433/9). See Shiloah's answer in No. 226 and Editorial Note, pp. 176–77.

220. S. Hyman to the Economic Division (Telegram). 14 June 1951

Notes

1. Untraced.
2. For the effect of the resolutions on trade between Israel and the Eastern bloc, see No. 228.

221. M. Keren (Washington) to S. Bendor. 14 June 1951

Orig.: 130.20/2479/9

Keren replies in Eban's name to Bendor's letter of 27 May.[1] He attacks Bendor's "baseless" assumptions about American policy towards Israel and seeks to refute them one by one. (a) "Grant-in-aid" — Bendor rejects the premise that the U.S. government is giving Israel a "slap in the face" if it does not meet the aid request down to the last cent. On the contrary: the Embassy staff believe that Israel came away with a respectable accomplishment in the American administration's very recognition of its right to aid. This is the first time that the Near East, including Israel, is benefiting from an American aid program. It is true that the sum proposed is smaller than that requested by Israel, but the figure of $150 million was not sacred and had been chosen on the basis of the advice of Israel's supporters in Congress as the most that could be demanded without causing dismay. Keren adds that he is unaware that the President had promised in any conversation that he would obtain the full sum for Israel. On the contrary: on a number of occasions he asserted that Congress held the key to the Treasury's coffers and he could make no promises in this matter. (b) The Hula affair—The events in the Security Council cannot be understood without taking into account the gross errors Israel had made in this matter. Keren agrees that the American approach was to appease the Arabs, but blames Israeli policy for having provided a pretext for the Americans' hostile stance. Keren suggests paying attention to the fact that in the Hula affair Syrian policy was more refined and sophisticated. The Syrians violated the armistice agreement and attacked Israel, but did not admit it publicly. They denied everything, thereby placing the onus of proof on Israel. By contrast, Israel not only violated the armistice agreement and international law, it even bragged about it for all to hear. Other Israeli actions, too, were injurious to its international image, such as the Prime Minister's speech,[3] the attitude towards the U.N. personnel,[4] and the expulsion of the Arabs from their villages. The Americans' sensitivity was motivated chiefly by the danger of a war between Israel and Syria that would ignite a general conflagration.

All this notwithstanding, Israel registered a political victory on two crucial points: its right to resume drainage work in the Hula was recognized and Syria's lack of authority to intervene in this matter was confirmed. Keren considers the Hula matter an isolated incident in Israel's relations with the United States, which will have no lasting effect on relations between the two countries.

As for the President, Keren assumes that he had not examined the

fine print of the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council and had relied on Acheson's recommendation. The Hula question was of no concern to American public opinion so the President had no reason to delve into its complexities. Israel's attempts to intervene with the President came too late. They were made after the President had approved the draft resolution, but even had they been made earlier they would probably not have changed anything.

Summing up, Keren writes that the conclusions to be drawn from the Hula affair are different from those drawn by Bendor. First, it should be understood that Israel occupies only a marginal and small place in American policy and in the President's thoughts. The hypothesis that the President had acted as he had because of the domestic situation or because he had decided not to run for re-election attests to a basic lack of understanding of the situation in the U.S. The Security Council's reprimand of Israel is a small concern for the President compared with the serious international problems he faces. At the same time, the President's friendship for Israel is an important asset. He will continue to intervene on Israel's behalf if Israel's representatives succeed in persuading him that such intervention is justified and corresponds with public opinion. Keren is puzzled by Bendor's proposal to loosen the connection with the Americans slowly, without Israel's having acquired another friend instead.

Keren is convinced that the tactics adopted by Israel in its relations with the U.S. have proven themselves and that the two countries are getting closer. In his opinion, it is altogether unjustifiable to draw earth-shaking conclusions from transient episodes and even temporary failures.

Nor does Keren agree with Bendor about the importance of the role of American Jewry in defining the relations between the two countries. The Jewish community cannot work miracles and it is usually influenced by general American public opinion. In the final analysis, Keren is convinced that Israel's relations with the United States are determined by American interests in the Middle East and not by any tactic adopted by Israel. Israel, not the U.S., holds the key to cultivating relations with the U.S.[5]

Notes

1. Bendor was concerned by two developments in Washington that raised questions concerning Israel's policy towards the United States: (a) The President had not taken any action to modify the Security Council resolution on the Hula, despite having seen it in advance. (b) Despite his promises and his meetings with Blaustein and Feinberg, the sum proposed in the economic aid program for the Middle East fell short of the amount requested by Israel. Bendor concluded that these develop-

ments indicated a *rapprochement* between the President and the State Department, the weakness of Israel's friends, and the possibility that the President had decided not to run for re-election, or was so sure of the support of American Jews that he felt no need to curry favour with them. Bendor proposed slackening the tie with the President in order to leave Israel some operational leeway in the future and even to reconsider whether the Israeli tactic of running headlong into the arms of the United States had not limited its freedom of manoeuvre (93.08/342/19).

2. See No. 187.
3. See No. 120, n. 2.
4. See No. 141 (appendix).
5. Bendor did not accept Keren's criticism and replied in detail to most of his arguments (13 July 1951, 93.08/337/18).

222. S. Pines[1] (Tel Aviv) to S. Divon. 14 June 1951

Memorandum: 130.02/2410/11

Pines writes about the possibility that Iran will withdraw its recognition of Israel. According to him, the demand has been raised in the Iranian Majlis on several occasions and has won the support of Musaddeq's right-hand man, Representative Hussein Makki, one of the leaders of the National Front, who claimed that the recognition had been achieved by bribery. Pines thinks it possible that the present Iranian government will withdraw it, relying on reasoning similar to Makki's. The upsurge of propaganda on this matter is related to the domestic balance of power in Iran and to its external situation. The National Front has formed an alliance with persons and organizations of a distinct Muslim religious orientation, known for their anti-Jewish leanings. Since the murder of Razmara[2] and the start of the campaign to nationalize oil production, religious tendencies of thought have gained strength in Iran, and the government is liable to appease religious circles by suggesting that recognition of Israel be withdrawn. Furthermore, the claim that the recognition had been achieved by bribery defames the previous regime and thereby serves the interests of the new one.

There are also reports about pressure being exerted by Arab countries to withdraw recognition. This pressure is liable to succeed at the present time because Iran needs diplomatic support in the wake of its serious dispute with Great Britain, the reserved attitude of the United States, and its apprehensions concerning the Soviet Union. Because of the oil conflict, Muslim solidarity has been transformed from a hollow slogan to a political weapon. The Iranian struggle has evoked a positive response in the Arab press. In these circumstances, Iran will be interested in satisfying the Arabs by withdrawing its recognition of Israel.

Pines presents several proposals for action: (1) Making contact with the Iranian ambassador to the United States and with the other Iranian legations. Pines assumes that the Iranians attribute great weight to the influence of Jewish public opinion in the United States and around the world. They have not despaired of obtaining American support in their struggle, and it is worth explaining to their representatives that action such as the withdrawal of recognition would mobilize against them an important segment of public opinion in that country. (2) A conversation with Safinia.[3] He should be apprised of the difficulties that would result for Iran in international circles should it withdraw recognition. He may also be given to understand that such a step would adversely affect the status of the Iranian legation in Israel. At the same time, one should refrain from threatening the Iranian community in Israel, lest this jeopardize the Jews of Iran. (3) Giving further concessions in property matters to the Iranian community in Israel. (4) Despatch of a person of some standing as a permanent liaison in Teheran.

Notes

1. Shlomo Pines, an assistant in the Research Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. See No. 99, n. 2.
3. Reza Safinia, Special Representative of Iran in Israel till July 1951.

223. E. Sasson (Ankara) to M. Sharett. 15 June 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2382/1

Sasson replies to Sharett's letter of 3 June.[1] He agrees with Sharett that one should not be impressed by the accusations made by Western statesmen that Israel lacks a constructive policy on peace. At the same time, he believes that the opinions of others should not be disregarded. Referring to Elath's letter of 25 May[2] concerning apprehensions about an activist British policy in the Arab world, Sasson warns that this policy would lead to attempts by Britain and thereafter by the United States to appease the Arabs at Israel's expense. In view of these developments, he proposes that Israel again call for peace with the Arabs, including a solution to the refugee problem based on their settlement in Arab countries and programs for the economic and social development of the Middle East. In his opinion, the publication of such a scheme would strike a sympathetic chord in American public opinion and among the Arab refugees.

Notes

1. Sharett rejected Sasson's comment about the importance of accusations by Western politicians that Israel's lack of a constructive Arab policy was preventing peace. Sharett wrote that he was not surprised by these accusations, since lurking in the wings was the assumption that Israel had to make far-reaching concessions for the sake of peace (130.10/2515/12; see also Sasson to Divon, 25 May 1951, 130.02/2410/9).
2. No. 202.

224. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 15 June 1951

Notes

1. Sharett was enraged with the members of the Israel delegation in New York and harshly rebuked them for releasing to the press a reaction to Riley's ruling on the Egyptian blockade of the Suez Canal (Editorial Note, p. 162) without consulting the senior echelons of the Ministry in Tel Aviv (14 June 1951, 130.09/2330/1; see also the text of the announcement in Harman's telegram to the Foreign Ministry, 14 June 1951, 130/13/2599/2).
2. See Vol. 5, Editorial Note, pp. 593–94.
3. See No. 23.

225. A. Eban to the United States Division (Telegram). 15 June 1951

Notes

1. The meeting took place at Eban's initiative. Cf. report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 720–22.
2. See No. 107, n. 2, and No. 108.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
4. Paragraph 3 of Article 8 of the armistice agreement with Syria stated that "the Parties . . . may, by mutual consent, revise this agreement . . . at any time"; in the absence of such mututal agreement, however, "either may call upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convoke a conference of representatives of the two Parties for the purpose of reviewing, revising or suspending any of the provisions of the agreement." Paragraph 4 of the same article stated that if at the conference mentioned in Paragraph 3 the parties failed to reach an agreement, "either Party may bring the matter before the Security Council of the United Nations for the relief sought . . .".
5. Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter, which deals with U.N. activities in connection with threats to peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.

226. R. Shiloah [Tel Aviv] to M. Sharett. 15 June 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2433/9

Shiloah expresses serious concern about the proposal to hold a meeting between representatives of the Syrian and Israeli foreign ministries.[1] He argues that Israel's very consent to discuss the fate of the demilitarized zone with the Syrians, even if hedged by the formula "without prejudice", constitutes an admission of sorts that the Syrians have certain rights in the area. To his mind, this danger is increased severalfold, in view of the inclination of Riley, the French, and even the British to appease the Syrians by border adjustments in the Hula area. Shiloah recommends that Israel make it clear that it is not willing to limit the debate to the border problem alone, but insists on discussing the full range of problems outstanding between Israel and Syria.

Note

1. See No. 219 and n. 1 *ibid.*

227. S. Bendor [Tel Aviv] to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 17 June 1951

Memorandum: 93.08/338/9

Bendor reports on a meeting in the Foreign Ministry on the subject of Jerusalem.[1] The deliberations concerned preparations for the possible raising of the Jerusalem question at the U.N. General Assembly, and the question of transferring the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Jerusalem. Several of those present (Comay, Rosenne, Avner) were of the opinion that the Vatican would not raise the question of Jerusalem at the forthcoming General Assembly, while others (Shiloah, Herzog) believed that the Vatican was trying to lull Israel into complacency and would submit the issue to the Assembly at a convenient time. Shiloah said that *faits accomplis* must be established in Jerusalem that would strengthen Israel's status in the city. Work should get underway on a partial transfer of the Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem, and a commissioner for the holy places should be appointed. Herzog suggested appeasing the Catholics on insignificant matters while at the same time demanding that they put an end to their anti-Israel propaganda in the world press. He objected to the appointment of a high commissioner for the holy places, and suggested as an alternative that an un-

official committee of the various denominations be established to discuss questions pertaining to visits to the holy places. He also suggested that Israel's proposal to internationalize the Old City be revived. Eytan said that the possibility that the Vatican would raise the Jerusalem question should be taken into account and all the necessary actions taken. L. Kohn suggested refraining from any action liable to provoke the Vatican into raising the Jerusalem question at the Assembly. Accordingly, he suggested that the transfer of the Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem not be begun. Rosenne and Bendor favoured relocating the Ministry—even step by step, if for technical reasons it could not be transferred in one go. Eytan rebutted their argument, claiming that there was no political value in moving part of the Ministry to Jerusalem, because the dubious political gain from transferring the Ministry was not equal to the damage that would be done by fragmenting it and severing sections of it from Tel Aviv. Comay, too, argued against a start in moving the Ministry before the General Assembly.

Bendor, Eytan, and Kohn opposed the appointment of a commissioner for the holy places because this would constitute an admission that the holy places were not being properly handled and that the government was incapable of dealing with them under the auspices of the existing ministries. Furthermore, the appointment of a commissioner was likely to be viewed as an imitation of Jordan or as an attempt to deceive the U.N. General Assembly. In the wake of these lines of reasoning, Shiloah retracted his proposal. The director-general and Bendor supported Herzog's proposal for a more liberal attitude towards Catholics and foreigners.

Sharett summed up the deliberations: inasmuch as there was no way of clearly knowing what the Vatican's schemes were, preparations should be made for any possible initiative on its part. On the other hand, Israel should do nothing that might prompt the Vatican to take action. Therefore no commissioner for the holy places should be appointed and internationalization of the Old City should not be proposed. There was nothing to be gained by partial transfer of the Foreign Ministry; such action might even cause great practical damage. The transfer of ministries to Jerusalem has caused many problems. Sharett opposed transferring the Ministry under conditions that would lead to demoralization and undermine its work.

Notes

1. Should read 15 June 1951. See abbreviated minutes of the session, 19 June 1951, 93.03/3061/9.
2. Ephraim Evron, private secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

3. George Hakim, Greek Catholic archbishop for Haifa, Acre, Nazareth and the Galilee.

228. Memorandum by M. Bartur[1] [Tel Aviv]. 17 June 1951

130.11/2512/8

Bartur sets forth the problems created for Israel's foreign trade as a result of intensified American efforts to halt the export of essential commodities to the Eastern Bloc countries.[2] The latter are interested in purchasing via Israel essential commodities such as metals, antibiotic drugs, motor vehicle parts, industrial diamonds, and the like. The Polish and Hungarian envoys in Israel, who have managed to get bids on these products from Israeli companies, are applying to the government to obtain the import and re-export permits needed to camouflage these transactions. In exchange they offer not only substantial profits in free currency but also the supply of vital commodities that Israel finds it hard to obtain (steel pipe, coal, raw materials). Because of the political risk involved, Israel hesitates to approve these transactions. Their non-implementation is harming Israel's foreign trade and is liable to bring about a cessation of trade with the Eastern Bloc. Local industry, too, will be adversely affected, especially the production of antibiotic drugs and industrial diamonds, if there are no contracts with the Eastern Bloc countries, because these states are willing to pay more than world market prices for such products.

Bartur suggests several courses of action: (a) Halting exports to the Eastern European countries, even if this causes harm to local industry. (b) Continuing to export to these countries, contrary to the wishes and interests of the West. (c) Approaching appropriate officials in Washington and the U.S. Embassy in Israel with a proposal that purchasing agencies in the United States agree to buy the production of Israel's diamond industry at prices above those of the world market. Thus Israel would not bear the full burden of cutting off exports to the Eastern Bloc countries.

Notes

1. Moshe Bartur, deputy director of the Economic Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. See No. 220.

229. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to A. Eban (Washington). 19 June 1951

Orig.: 93.08/338/40

Bendor informs Eban of the proposal put forward by the Syrian representative on the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Committee, which had been transmitted in unofficial talks with Ramati and Hanegbi,[1] that representatives of the Israeli and Syrian foreign ministries meet[2] to discuss the demilitarized zone. This proposal had been rejected by the Israeli member, who claimed that Israel did not recognize Syria's right to discuss the matter of the demilitarized zone. In another conversation, the Syrian member proposed meeting in order to find a *modus vivendi*. He suggested that such a discussion be held in the presence of U.N. officials, including Riley. The Foreign Ministry decided that it was impossible to turn down the Syrian invitation, and therefore adopted the following directives: (1) To ask the Syrians to propose an agenda for the meeting. (2) To oppose the participation of Riley or of other U.N. personnel.

Notes

1. Segan-Aluf Michael Hanegbi, senior Israeli representative on the Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commission. From June 1951 also a member of the Israel-Syria and Israel-Lebanon Mixed Armistice Commissions.
2. See No. 219 and n. 1 *ibid.*

230. G. Avner to M. Fischer. 20 June 1951

Notes

1. In answer to Avner's letter of 14 June (untraced), Fischer clarified the misunderstanding that had arisen in the report submitted to Avner by Guyon on Fischer's talk with Binoche concerning the French initiative to mediate between Israel and Syria (130.10/2516/10).
2. See No. 210.

231. E. Zippori[1] (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations, (New York). 20 June 1951

Orig.: 93.03/3073/6

Zippori announces a change in Israel's position on the admission of Japan to U.N. agencies. It has been decided to stop abstaining and to support Japan's admission to the various agencies. The change comes in the wake of the dispatch to Japan of an Israeli trade mission, which is about to request long-term credit. The Foreign Minister agrees that it was not possible to object to the admission of a country to the U.N.'s economic, cultural, and technical agencies while simultaneously asking it for credit. Instructions to vote in favour of Japan have been sent to the Israel delegation to the UNESCO conference. Notification to this effect has also been forwarded to the U.S. Embassy in Israel.

Note

1. Emanuel Y. Zippori, an official in the Division of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

232. M. Comay (Tel Aviv) to W. Eytan. 22 June 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2418/18

Comay reports on a consultation he held with Shiloah on the diplomatic activity to be undertaken with respect to the Suez Canal and the Arab boycott. They agree with the general conclusions of Robinson and Rosenne[1] that diplomatic measures are preferable to legal action and that the efforts should be directed towards action by the Security Council. Robinson and Rosenne recommend that Israel should submit a complaint to the Security Council.

Comay and Shiloah do not accept Robinson and Rosenne's assumption that the events in Iran and the negotiations with Egypt may lead to a conciliatory attitude towards the Arabs that would be detrimental to Israel's interests, so that action at the present time is not recommended. Their remarks apply to Great Britain alone. In their opinion, the British government's efforts to reach a conciliatory agreement with Egypt have caused a tempest in Parliament and criticism of the government. The current mood of Parliament in London is more favourable to Israel than ever before.

Comay and Shiloah examined the question of launching a general offensive against the Arab countries at this stage and reached the fol-

lowing conclusions as to the risks and drawbacks of this action: (1) Such action is likely to muddy the clear-cut dispute that had arisen on the Canal issue and cause wasted efforts that should be focused in one direction. (2) Such action is liable to make things easier for those who are scheming to apply new pressure on Israel to make concessions to the Arabs. (3) So long as the Powers are trying to defuse the tension and create a favourable atmosphere for resolving the conflict, they would accuse Israel of deliberately sabotaging these efforts if it embarked on a diplomatic offensive against the Arabs at this stage. (4) If Israel protests loudly against the Arab boycott it would thereby confirm the Arabs' belief that it had reached the stage of economic collapse and they would continue and strengthen the boycott.

Despite these drawbacks, Shiloah and Comay believe that Israel should embark on a broad general offensive against the Arab states, while at the same time submitting a complaint over the Suez Canal blockade. They advise separating the two campaigns but coordinating their simultaneous presentation before the Security Council.[2]

Notes

1. In the memorandum on the Suez Canal problem they sent to Sharett on 18 June 1951, 130.20/2483/1.
2. The memorandum was passed on to Eban, who replied that he "accepts the basic viewpoint of Shiloah and Comay and would even elevate it to the status of a principle: every time we have the possibility of appearing in any conflict with an Arab party as petitioners and initiators rather than as defendants we must exploit the chance without mercy. Otherwise we will always find ourselves in an inferior and uncomfortable position. A policy of taking the initiative will help restore the balance and will also influence U.N. personnel on the spot to make efforts to solve several problems in our favour" (Eban to U.S. Division, 9 July 1951, 130.20/2483/1).

233. A. Eban (Washington) to R. Shiloah. 22 June 1951

Copy: 130.15/2564/24

Eban replies to Shiloah's letter of 30 May.[1] He retracts his previous assessment that there has been a turn for the worse in American policy towards Israel. Now that the smoke of battle in the Hula affair has dispersed, Eban tends to a less grim assessment of the situation and views the entire episode as a transient one from which nothing can be inferred as to the nature of American policy in general. In the most recent conversation with McGhee,[3] a sympathetic attitude towards Israel emerged, and even a tone of regret and apology. Eban believes

that the United States demands no more of Israel than strict adherence to the armistice agreements and to refrain from causing this framework any shock or provocation which could lead to its collapse. He argues that it is inaccurate to claim that the U.S. initiated and guided the Security Council debate. The point of departure for the U.N debate was a series of hostile reports by the U.N. observers. The draft resolution submitted by the U.S. was merely an accurate reflection of the picture described in these reports. The State Department repeatedly stressed to Israeli representatives that in any breakdown of the armistice framework its position would be affected mainly by the reports of the U.N. personnel on the spot and it would not assume responsibility for a separate assessment. At no stage of the Hula affair was there any confirmation of Israel's claims in any of the observers' reports, neither with regard to the justification of the Israeli military operations nor with regard to Syrian aggression. In Eban's view, Israel must admit that there is no possibility of losing a political campaign in the armistice theatre and winning it in the Security Council.

The factor that raised disgruntlement with Israel to an unprecedented level was the expulsion of the Arabs and destruction of the villages. Eban takes the view that there is a growing tendency in world public opinion to acquiesce in the existence of an Arab diaspora but an absolute refusal to increase its dimensions. Even the Israeli argument on this matter had gone through several versions and foreign governments find it hard to keep track of and accept them: (1) In 1947—a Jewish state is capable of absorbing an Arab minority of 750,000, and this fact does not detract in the slightest from the Jewish state's right to exist and its ability to develop. (2) In 1948—the Arab refugees must not be returned until peace is established. (3) In 1949—even when peace prevails no more than 100,000 refugees can be allowed to return. (4) In 1950—not a single additional Arab should be allowed to return to Israel. (5) In 1951—Israel no longer accepts even the existing Arab minority and exploits every opportunity to expel the Arabs. Israel aspires, ultimately, to Arab emigration to the Arab states.

In Eban's opinion, the five stages in the development of the Israeli position are understood by those living in Israel but not by the world at large. Before world opinion had accepted the fourth stage Israel had already begun wiping out the existing Arab community. Eban is convinced that the international community will recognize the intrinsic advantages of an exchange of populations; in his opinion, the time has come to underscore the immigration of the Jews from the Arab countries as the other side of the flow of Arab refugees to the Arab countries. At the same time, Eban believes that world public opinion must be readied for this stage. Until this is done, it will totally reject

any calculated attempt to expel Arabs and destroy villages. Western diplomats fear that Israel will not make the effort required to integrate itself into the region and will always remain a foreign implant there. For that reason they tend to react with hostility to every action that seems to demonstrate that Israel has no sincere desire for peace. Summing up, Eban writes that the key to sound relations with the United States should be found in a serious effort on Israel's part to uphold the armistice agreements scrupulously, with neither provocation nor especially sharp reactions during a period of global tension. Eban admits that the State Department's tendency to appease the Arabs is blatant and clear-cut, but it will not be enhanced unless Israel arouses it by taking some ill-considered action. In contrast to the State Department's bias, there are factors that severely limit and constrain the ability of Israel's opponents in America to do it harm. Among these Eban mentions Israel's sovereign international status, the sympathy of the American public, Jewish solidarity, the growing assessment of Israel's ability in American defence circles, and the President's attitude. Eban is convinced that if Israel learns to utilize the factors operating in its favour in the U.S. it will succeed in offsetting the State Department's influence.

Notes

1. Shiloah lists his conclusions and assessments with regard to the Hula affair. In his opinion, the Syrians had managed to win Western sympathy for their position that their border with Israel had to be modified. Proposals concerning partition of the demilitarized zone, straightening of lines, or planning of water projects attest to the new trend. The mood of Western policymakers springs from a policy of appeasement towards the Arab world and competition among the powers for influence over Syria. At the same time, he points to mistakes committed by Israel during the dispute. In his view, Israel had failed to get along with Riley and had initiated military operations without sufficiently considering the results of the policy. Shiloah sees the Syrian affair as a turning-point in the Middle East policy of the Great Powers and suggests that Israel take steps to meet future contingencies (93.08/338/48).
2. The conference of Jewish organizations in the United States, which had met on 27–29 October 1950. The conference approved a plan to raise a billion dollars for Israel over four years.
3. See No. 225.

234. W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington (Telegram). 22 June 1951

Notes

1. Lourie asked for procedural details concerning the return of the Sha'ab Arabs and

the number of those returning, in light of the interest of the U.N. delegations in this matter (21 June 1951, 93.01/2203/7).

2. Cf. Editorial Note, p. 153, and No. 209.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 140.

235. W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington (Telegram). 24 June 1951

Note

1. Eban requested clarification of Israel's position on the French peace initiative. (See Nos. 210 and 217 and Eban's telegram to the U.S. Division, 19 June 1951, 93.01/2203/9.)

236. M. Comay to E. Elath. 24 June 1951

Notes

1. The meeting took place on 4 June (see Elath to the British Commonwealth Division, 6 June 1951, 130.13/2587/9).
2. See Vol. 5, No. 248.
3. Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Pender-Cudlip, British military attaché in Israel.
4. Capt. A. G. Poe, British naval attaché in Israel and Turkey.
5. The interview took place on 21 June. Helm presented his personal reaction to the French peace initiative. He claimed that the Conciliation Commission was not much use and it was essential that the three Western powers take the initiative themselves. He estimated that the Americans were chary about taking the initiative after having been burned the last time and would not make any official approaches to Israel or the Arab countries before cautious probes had proved that there were chances for success. He saw no chances for great progress in one go and said that the entire proposal had come about only because of the Hula problem, which should be solved by partitioning the demilitarized zone. At the end of the telegram Comay pointed out that the true question was whether the Arabs intended to make war on Israel or not. (See Comay's telegram to Israeli Legation in London, IL762, 21 June 1951, 130.09/2318/7.)

Editorial Note

Consultation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Major Issues Facing Israel's Foreign Policy—25 June

On 25 June, a consultation between the Foreign Minister and his division heads was held at the Foreign Ministry. The major issues facing Israel's foreign policy were discussed: Suez, the Hula reclamation pro-

ject, the Arabs who had been evacuated to Sha'ab, the status of the demilitarized zone, negotiations with Syria, and the forthcoming U.N. General Assembly. Some of the principal conclusions of the meeting are summarized below:

(1) Concerning the blockade of the Suez Canal, it was agreed that General Riley had adhered to a literal reading of the armistice agreement and that his latest ruling (see Editorial Note, p. 162) had accepted the Egyptian interpretation that any hostile act not explicitly forbidden was permitted. It was decided to point out the danger to the armistice posed by such an interpretation and to blame the Arab countries, and Egypt in particular, for the absence of peace and stability in the Middle East. It was also decided to emphasize the grave economic damage to Israel caused by the Canal blockade "and to indicate the implications of this economic damage with regard to Israel's ability to pay compensation".

(2) Concerning the status of the Syrians in the demilitarized zone, it was agreed that Israel should not enter negotiations about the monitoring of the armistice agreement since such action would undermine the basis of the *status quo* without making any progress towards peace.

(3) Concerning the Arabs who had been evacuated to Sha'ab, Sharett said that Riley's request that a date be set by which all the evacuees would be returned to the demilitarized zone ran counter to their Rehovot agreement (see No. 234). Eytan claimed that from the very beginning Israel's position had not been justified and stated that "they must all be returned at once, without conditions and without any further discussion." Sharett disagreed and justified Israel's policy. He made it clear that Israel had explained from the outset that the Arabs had asked to be evacuated in view of the security situation, and could return when they wished to do so. Shiloah, too, opposed Eytan's approach. He agreed that the matter had to be solved in the near future, but only "through an agreement and not by a unilateral order." Avner and L. Kohn supported Eytan. Finally, it was decided to propose to Riley that all Arabs who wished to return be repatriated on a fixed date, in accordance with a signed list, and to invite him to a meeting, should he reject the proposal.

(4) Concerning the Syrian initiative on direct negotiations, and the Israeli response to the French mediation proposal, it was agreed that "we welcome any effort on the part of the Powers that leads to direct negotiations, but are wary of any mediation effort. Fair and balanced give-and-take negotiations are possible only through face-to-face meetings. Mediation weakens our tactical position, since it is liable to lead to demands for unilateral concessions on our part." (See summaries of the meeting, 25 June 1951, 93.08/338/42.)

237. A. Harman to A. Eban. 25 June 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. Harry Zinder, Director of the Information Office at the Israel Consulate in New York and at the Israel Delegation to the United Nations.

238. A. Eban to the United States Division (Telegram). 25 June 1951

Notes

1. John J. McCloy, U.S. High Commissioner for Germany.
2. See No. 85 and Editorial Note, p. 78.
3. The reference is to the judicial review of 101 verdicts against Nazi war criminals held in the American zone of occupation, which resulted in a mitigation of their sentences. The results of the review were published in January 1951. (Seven death sentences and five prison sentences were upheld; 21 prisoners had their death sentences commuted; 33 prisoners were to be released shortly as a result of a shortening of their sentences; and the sentences of 35 others were reduced.) During February, the commander of the American forces in Europe ordered the release of Nazi criminals from the Landsberg and Augsburg prisons. Israel had submitted a special memorandum to the U.S. government on this issue on 12 March 1951 (93.03/344/17).
4. See No. 243 and Editorial Note, p. 180.

239. Ambassador of Israel in the United States to the Secretary of State. 26 June 1951

Notes

1. Eban handed the present document to McGhee at their meeting on 26 June. For details of the talk between them, see Eban's telegram to the U.S. Division, W153, 25 June 1951, 93.01/2207/18.
2. See Vol. 5, No. 517 and n. 2 *ibid.*
3. See No. 115.
4. The appendixes are not on file.
5. See additional telegram on this subject, sent to the State Department on 11 July 1951, 93.08/344/2.

240. *Aide-Mémoire* from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 27 June 1951

Notes

1. The version presented here is taken from Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 302, 1 July 1951, 130.20/2463/8.
2. The memorandum was delivered to the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv on the same day.
3. See No. 150.

241. S. Eliashiv (Moscow) to A. Levavi. 28 June 1951

Orig.: 130.11/2492/16

Eliashiv reports on his meetings with officials of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. He met with the chief of protocol; with the acting foreign minister, Zorin; with the two deputy foreign ministers; and with the acting director of the Middle East Department, Bazarov. The talks were interesting and cordial. Eliashiv described the problems facing the State of Israel and, in the main, found a sympathetic audience. He singles out his talks with Zorin, who expressed interest in a number of issues. However, when Eliashiv mentioned the importance of emigration from Eastern Europe, Zorin cut him off and ended the discussion abruptly.

Eliashiv is extremely impressed by the progress that has taken place in Moscow since his last visit. He mentioned this to the President of the Soviet Union when presenting his credentials. Eliashiv reports that he was favourably impressed by the attention given Israel in the Soviet press, and in particular by the official reports of the presentation of his credentials and his call upon Zorin. At the same time, he condemns the propaganda published in the Soviet press concerning the establishment of American bases in Israel, as well as other unfounded reports drawn from the Israeli Communist Party newspaper *Kol Ha-am.*

Notes

1. See Eliashiv's telegrams to the Foreign Ministry, IP676, 14 June 1951, PI679, 18 June 1951; and 320, 18 June 1951, 130.09/2325/6.
2. In a marginal note in the original, Eliashiv here corrected an error in the encoding of one of his telegrams. The note has been omitted here.
3. Nikolai Shvernik, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

Editorial Note

Eban-Byroade meeting: Presentation of memoranda from the Government of Israel.

These two documents were handed to the director of the Bureau of German Affairs in the State Department, H. Byroade, on 29 June 1951. Commenting on the first document, Byroade stated that some countries had expressed their wish to take part in the meeting of the Western Powers on the debts of Nazi Germany, but that so far no such request had been granted. The Powers would consider the Israeli request, but it must be stressed that the objective of the forthcoming meeting was merely to prepare for the plenary conference in the autumn. Eban answered that Israel would be interested in participating in the autumn conference if the United States saw no possibility of inviting it as an observer to the forthcoming meeting.

When Eban handed over the second document, he pointed to the difference between the standard of living in Germany and that in Israel, maintaining that it was not right that "the perpetrators of the Holocaust should enjoy a higher standard of living than their surviving victims". Byroade apologized for the delay in the Powers' reply to the Israeli note on the reparations issue and admitted that the reply would not satisfy Israel even though it would not encourage the Germans. (See Keren to the U.S. Division, 3 July 1951, 93.08/344/15. Cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 741–42. See the Powers' reply in No. 254 and Editorial Note there.)

242. Note from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 29 June 1951

Notes

1. On 26 May the Western Powers announced the establishment of a committee for settling West Germany's foreign debts, which amounted to 4.5 billion dollars.
2. No. 80.
3. No. 89.
4. No. 84.
5. In his reply, dated 12 July, the Secretary of State informed Israel that the Western Powers had decided to reject its request to take part as an observer in the preliminary discussions. Israel would be invited to the conference to be convened that autumn in London, at which all parties concerned in the issue of Germany's foreign debt would be given the opportunity to voice their positions (93.03/3063/18).

243. *Aide-Mémoire* from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 29 June 1951

Note

1. See No. 84 and Editorial Note there.

244. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 29 June 1951

Notes

1. See No. 195, n. 2. On 19 June, the Iranian government broke off negotiations with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and began measures to implement the oil nationalization law. Two days later the Iranian Parliament approved the government's measures and expressed confidence in Musaddeq's government. During the debate, mobs had broken into and vandalized the offices of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in Teheran and draped Iranian flags on the company's headquarters building. At the same time, Morrison told the British Cabinet that Britain had no intention of evacuating the oil fields in Iran and would do all in its power to defend British subjects in that country. The dispute, which grew worse in the following days, threatened the continued operation of the Abadan oil field. American mediation attempts in mid-July were unsuccessful. Towards October of that year the British staff of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company left Abadan. The oil refinery ceased operation and Iranian oil exports were paralyzed.
2. The reference is to Riley's interim report on the implementation of the Security Council resolution of 18 May 1951 (see Editorial Note, p. 140). The report comprised two parts. The first was sent to the U.N. Secretary-General on 26 June, the second on 28 June. In the first part, Riley discussed the renewal of work on the Hula reclamation scheme on a 25-dunam Arab-owned tract inside the demilitarized zone. Given that attempts to settle the problem via the Mixed Armistice Commission had not succeeded, Riley proposed acting according to Article 8 of the Armistice Agreement.

   In the second part, Riley accused Israel of refusing to obey the Security Council resolution. He stated that the provisions of the resolution concerning the return of Arabs whom Israel had evacuated from the demilitarized zone to Sha'ab had not been implemented, nor had Israeli policemen been removed from Arab-owned land situated in the demilitarized zone. He singled out the Khuri orchard. (See U.N. Documents S/2213 and S/2213 Add.1, 27 and 28 June 1951, 93.08/339/4; *SCOR, Sixth Year, Supplement for 1 April–30 June 1951*, pp. 174–77.) See also Nos. 247 and 255.
3. See No. 206.
4. The reference is to a booklet summarizing the Hula question. See Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 295, 18 June 1951, 130.02/4364.
5. See No. 225, n. 4.

245. M. Sharett [Tel Aviv] to S. Rosenne. 30 June 1951

Copy: 93.08/338/39

Sharett rejects Rosenne's claim that there has been a change in Israel's position on the question of peace with the Arabs.[1] He explains that Israel had never adhered to the slogan "peace on any terms" and that this is still its policy. Even if the Prime Minister did state on a certain occasion that the greater Israel's population, the stronger its position in the peace process, he did not thereby intend to say that Israel is not interested in peace at the moment or that it prefers to reject it. It is not in Israel's interest to create the impression at the U.N. that it does not want peace. On the contrary, it is important to emphasize the fact that Israel wants peace, whereas the Arabs reject it. Sharett emphasizes that he totally repudiates the approach that an immediate peace settlement, were that possible, is not in Israel's interests.

Notes

1. Sharett is replying to Rosenne's memorandum concerning Israeli policy, given the U.N. plans to reorganize its operations in Palestine with the aim of promoting peace between Israel and the Arabs. Rosenne refers to statements by Ben-Gurion at one of the consultations wherein he had tried "to postpone the making of peace until we have doubled our population again" and had said that for the time being he was content with the *status quo,* "at least if making peace at the present time involves concessions that we are not prepared to make". Rosenne concludes from these statements that in Israel the fervour for peace had died down and that the current situation of no-peace no-war suited it. Analysis of the U.N. plans in light of Israel's political objectives led Rosenne to the following conclusions: (a) "We do not have to agree to any change in the organizational structure of the United Nations in the political arena. . . . From our point of view it is better that the Conciliation Commission and the U.N. Chief of Staff remain as they are now, with no change in either composition or authority." (b) Israel must not agree to any proposals for amending the armistice agreements. (c) Attempts to rationalize the U.N. agencies active in the country should be opposed. (d) Israel should strive to reach a solution to the refugee problem and draw the appropriate organizational conclusions. He supported the merger of the various bodies dealing with Arab refugees (document dated 24 June 1951, 93.08/338/39).
2. See No. 214.

246. W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington (Telegram). 1 July 1951

Notes

1. The main thrust of the proposal was: a request to restrict the police forces in the

demilitarized zone and match them to the numerical ratio of the Jewish and Arab inhabitants. Since the Arab population of the demilitarized zone exceeded the Jewish population, such a proposal meant an increase in the number of Arab policemen. The U.N. representatives wanted to organize the police force and take control of the zone. (130.02/2433/9.)
2. 29 June; report in File 130.02/2433/9.
3. Seren Aryeh Friedlander, Israel representative on the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
5. See No. 250.
6. From 1954—Kibbutz Gadot.

247. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 1 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 225, n. 5.
2. Edward P. Maffitt, Adviser for Security Council and General Affairs, U.S. Permanent Delegation to the United Nations.
3. See No. 244, n. 2.
4. See No. 225, n. 4.
5. See No. 225.
6. In a telegram to Sharett the next day, Eban stated that Stabler and Waldo had moderated their position as presented by Maffitt and Ross. That same morning they had told Herlitz that the United States would not initiate a debate on Suez, but if Israel raised the matter they would strongly condemn the blockade. On the Hula matter, they made it clear that Israel first had to solve the problem of the Sha'ab Arabs and that of the police in the demilitarized zone; but the United States was interested in paving the way for completion of the Hula project. (See Telegram W170, 2 July 1951, 93.01/2207/19; Herlitz's report on the conversation with Waldo on 2 July, 6 July 1951, 130.20/2479/9.)
7. Anthony Eden, Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Conservative) in the House of Commons. From October, 1951, Foreign Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister.
8. See No. 246.

248. G. Avner to M. Fischer. 1 July 1951

Note

1. Fischer pointed out the contradiction between Avner's letters concerning Israel's policy on the independent French initiative to mediate between it and Syria. He requested clarification as to whether he should encourage France to take steps on its own. He also reported on a talk with Luc, from which he gathered that there was a possibility of a separate French diplomatic move if the Western Powers' joint initiative failed. (See Fischer to Avner, 22 June 1951, 130.10/2530/7; also Avner's letters to Fischer, 17 June 1951, 93.02/172/11; 18 June 1951, 93.02/136/10.)

249. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tel Aviv): Information to the Israel Missions Abroad. 3 July 1951

93.08/339/5

Sharett comments on Eban's letter.[1] He agrees with Eban that the conciliatory line towards the Arab states at Israel's expense is deeply-rooted in American policy, the State Department in particular. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that the State Department does not by itself shape and implement United States policy. Other elements, such as the President, Congress, public opinion, and various groups in American society influence its policy, too. The negative line in American policy is usually a reaction to measures favourable to Israel, such as the Partition resolution, diplomatic recognition, admission to the U.N., the American loan, and, most recently, the grant-in-aid initiative in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

In Sharett's opinion, there is no justification for viewing the anti-Israel schemes concocted in the State Department as the result of ill will or prejudice. They are merely the fruit of the State Department's natural sensitivity to Arab reactions to U.S. Middle East policy, especially as this relates to Israel. As was the case with Britain in the past, Israel's struggle against the hostile policy of the State Department is in the final analysis a struggle against the Arab world.

Israel lacks an adequate appreciation of the shock wrought in the Arab world by the establishment of the State, and of the scope and intensity of the hatred of Israel and lust for revenge against her that exist throughout the Middle East. These impulses determine the climate of relations between Israel and her neighbours. Israel's achievements in Washington should be evaluated against this background and in the light of the constant strengthening of America's ties with the Arab countries. One of these achievements is the State Department's clear retreat from its previous negative positions on borders and the refugee problem.

Sharett agrees that the State Department's policy has become a tool for freezing the *status quo,* contrary to Israel's vital interests. But it should not be concluded from this that the guiding principle of United States policy is one of hostility and opposition to Israel all down the line. It may be asserted that the common denominator in the various manifestations of American policy in the Middle East is a desire to avoid unnecessary shocks and prevent changes liable to undermine international stability. This principle does not always work to Israel's disadvantage. For example, its application helped Israel in two major questions: the border problem and the refugee problem.

Sharett suggests that Israel refrain as much as possible from rock-

ing the boat unnecessarily and thereby facilitating complaints against herself. He admits that Israel made mistakes throughout the Hula affair and suggests that a thorough investigation be undertaken so as to prevent errors in the future.

Sharett welcomes the initiative of a renewed appeal to the important sectors of Jewish public opinion in the United States, but stresses that Israel cannot rely exclusively on this source of support. Despite the importance of the effort to unite American Jewry around Israel, it should be borne in mind that in every disagreement with the State Department the decisive factor will be the state of direct relations between Israel and the United States.

Sharett admits that he cannot lay down a single policy that will ensure the achievement of the Israeli objectives. He proposes that Israel avail itself of every influential factor it can mobilize on its behalf and point out in the press the ineffectiveness of appeasement.

Note

1. The first paragraph of the document, omitted here, includes Eban's letter of 24 May included above in No. 201.

250. S. Ramati to S. G. Taxis. 3 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 246, and n. 2 *ibid.*
2. See Editorial Note, p. 140.

251. S. Bentsur (Budapest) to A. Levavi. 4 July 1951

Coded Tel.: Inc.: 130.09/2295/9

Bentsur reports on a conversation with Kutas. Kutas claimed that the problem of the emigrants who want to return to Hungary is not being dealt with and asked Bentsur to keep his promise on this matter.[1] He mentioned articles in the Israeli press and protest meetings of Hungarian immigrants, which had generated a poisonous anti-Hungarian atmosphere. He expressed his apprehension that this atmosphere had influenced the Israeli government into delaying the returnees, adding that this was keeping Hungary from concluding the emigration of 3000 Jews. Demonstrations and attacks in the press would not influ-

ence the Hungarian government to modify its policy. Bentsur replied that neither the press nor independent organizations in Israel should be identified with the government. The Israeli public was concerned about the fate of Hungarian Jewry, and this concern manifested itself in various ways. At the same time, the government was concerned about the prevention of the emigration of Hungarian Jews and hopes that the problem would be resolved in negotiations between the two countries, which it was prepared to conduct at any time.

Bentsur pressures his colleagues to keep the promises Israel made to Hungary with regard to the returning emigrés. In his opinion, 70 persons wishing to return to Hungary are not worth the stigma of a state which does not honour its obligations. He proposes that the affair be wound up quickly. He also proposes halting JDC activity in Hungary, instructing Israel's envoys to bring up the matter of *aliya* in meetings with Soviet representatives, organizing a nation-wide reaction in Israel, and dispatching a letter from Ben-Gurion to Rákosi.

Note

1. Moshe Walter, Deputy Director of the East European Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The letter has not been traced.

252. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 5 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 244, n. 1.
2. Eban had sent a telegram to the effect that Jebb had not yet received instructions from London, but he assumed that they were considering pursuing their initiative; he requested the results of the clarification in Tel Aviv before deciding how to act (telegram to Sharett, X148, 5 July 1951, 130.09/2330/6).

253. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to A. Eban (Washington). 5 July 1951

Orig.: 93.08/339/5

Sharett writes about the exact situation regarding continuation of the Hula drainage work during the coming weeks. He sets forth the technical questions pertaining to the drainage project from its inception. At the outset, all the experts agreed that it was possible to drain the basin only through excavating along both banks of the Jordan. When the tension with Syria began, under the pressure of events the experts

agreed to carry out the work only on the western bank. At that stage they noted the need to work on Arab plots on the western side — whence the second crisis in the conflict developed. The question arose whether this time too those parcels were absolutely necessary or whether it might be possible to get the job done while bypassing them. From a consultation with the chief engineer of the Jewish National Fund it became clear that the work could indeed be done without making use of the Arab plots. The Arab parcels are of two kinds: (1) Certain small and extremely narrow strips of land along the eastern bank. The Jordan river bed would be straightened only along the western bank, all of which lies in Israeli territory, and the eastern bank would keep its curves. This measure would not undermine the basic elements of the project. (2) Two Arab plots on the western side of the river, which it would be necessary to use according to the original drainage plan: one along the river, which belongs to the Waqf, the other a plot from the Khuri orchard, located just at the spot where it would have been necessary to build the dam to impound the Jordan waters. Sharett delineates for Eban what the experts are planning in order to permit the project to continue without infringing on any Arab-owned land. At the same time, he foresees trouble with the Syrians when the dam is finished and put into operation, at which point Israel will be forced to deepen the Jordan river bed. Sharett suggests that Israel brace itself for a new commotion, which Syria will try to stir up at that stage. The Israeli line will be that throughout the drainage work Israel had been making fundamental changes by straightening the river bed of the Jordan and that the only constraint that Israel had accepted was to keep off private land to which title was held by Arabs with whom it had not yet reached an arrangement. Sharett sees another potential source of complications in the stoppage of water flow to the Arabs living on both sides of the Jordan between the dam and the Sea of Galilee. He says that in normal times it would have been possible to provide them with the water through a pipeline, but today the Syrians are using these Arabs as pawns so that a major dispute is liable to develop. Sharett makes it clear that everything will be done to avert trouble by means of local arrangements and a fair provision of water for daily consumption. The experts do not foresee problems with the flow of water south of the Sea of Galilee. Another possible complication after the dam goes into service involves the inundation of the edges of the Arab fields on both sides of the Jordan north of the dam when its gates are closed.

Finally, Sharett explains that all the problems related to draining the Hula exemplify the difficulties faced by Israel when it seeks to carry out a project of such a clearly positive nature.

As for the struggle in the U.N., Sharett adds that Israel must not

yield to the resolution of 18 May[4] and must not change its position in the Security Council.

Notes

1. Yaakov Geri, Minister of Trade and Industry.
2. See Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 305, 3 July 1951, 93.03/3007/4. The document contains details of the complaint made by the Jordanian government to the U.N. Secretary-General against Israeli infringement of its rights to the waters of the Jordan and Yarmuk rivers and on its diplomatic action in the matter. The Israeli counter-argument was also presented.
3. See No. 247.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 140.

Editorial Note

The Powers' Note to Israel on Reparations from Germany

On 5 July, McGhee delivered to the Israel representative in Washington the U.S. reply to the Israeli note of 12 March 1951 (No. 84). On the same day, the British and French replies were handed over in London and Paris (130/10/2543/5; 93.08/344/21). The three replies were similar, except for the issue of Germany's ability to pay reparations, which was raised only in the American note. The Soviet Union did not reply. When delivering the note, McGhee added the following comments: (a) The State Department advises Israel to open direct negotiations with Germany on a reparations agreement. (b) In order not to prejudice the talks, the State Department requests that the note not be made public. The Department would address a similar request to Britain and France. (See Keren's telegram to the U.S. Division, W178, 5 July 1951, 93.01/2207/19 and cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 748–52.)

254. Note from the Government of the United States to the Government of Israel. 5 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 84 and Editorial Note, p. 78.
2. See No. 89.
3. See Vol. 5, No. 148.
4. In December 1950.

255. Meeting: M. Sharett–M. B. Davis (Tel Aviv, 1 July 1951, document dated 5 July 1951)

Report: 130.20/2481/3

The ambassador asked for details on the latest talks with General Riley. Sharett said that he finds it hard to understand Riley. He related that the conversation on 29 June among Riley, Taxis, Eytan, and Israeli members of the Mixed Armistice Commission ended with full agreement on the Sha'ab problem.[1] A procedure was determined for a referendum among the Arabs of Sha'ab, after which those wishing to return to the demilitarized zone would be allowed to do so. Sharett had believed that the matter was resolved, but, to his surprise, the very next day saw the publication of a report from Riley to the Security Council in which he accused Israel of refusing to comply with the Council's resolution.[2] Despite Riley's strange conduct, Israel did not enter into an argument with him or make public details of the agreement that had been concluded with him. Davis tried to explain Riley's attitude. He said that Riley had implicit confidence in the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Government's commitments, but there were apparently those at lower echelons who were trying to "influence" the evicted Arabs now in Sha'ab, and it was because of them that Riley had acted as he did. Sharett said that in his conversation with Riley in Rehovot[3] he told him that the true test of the Arabs' desire to return or stay would come only when the trucks arrived—those who wanted to return would get into them and those who wanted to remain in Sha'ab would stay behind. Sharett reiterated that Riley's last report had taken Israel by surprise, and that he was waiting to see whether Riley would send another report in the wake of the agreement reached at the most recent meeting.

Sharett brought up the question of Riley's previous report to the Security Council concerning the 25 dunams belonging to the Arabs.[4] Riley seems to be aiming at activation of Article 8 of the Armistice Agreement in order to bring about appropriate amendments in the agreement through negotiations between Israel and Syria. Sharett said that this proposal is not viable. The negotiations would lead nowhere and would thereby undermine the force of the agreement itself. Border rectifications are the Syrians' goal; they are not genuinely concerned about the Arabs of the demilitarized zone. The Syrians want to reach the shore of the Sea of Galilee and the sources of the Jordan. Sharett made it clear that Israel would not agree to relinquish an inch of territory included within the Mandatory boundaries. Davis asked how Israel would react to the possibility of mediation between Israel and Syria by the three Powers. Sharett reiterated that Israel agreed to

comprehensive negotiations dealing with all the unresolved problems between herself and Syria with the objective of reaching a peace agreement, but would not agree to extract one problem from the full package and turn it into the sole topic of deliberations — *a fortiori* when it was clear from the outset that there was no chance of reaching an agreement and that by agreeing to open negotiations Israel was undermining its own position. Israel supports direct negotiations and would be grateful to the Powers if they succeeded in inducing the Syrians to join such talks. Davis said that he understood Israel's position well and had no illusions about the Syrians' aspirations to make border changes. He had written to the State Department in this vein.[6]

At this point Davis brought up the question of police units in the demilitarized zone. Sharett responded that Israel based its position on three things: (1) the Armistice Agreement; (2) Bunche's correspondence—were it not for Bunche's clarifications in his letter to the Foreign Minister of 26 June 1949 Israel would not have signed the Armistice Agreement as presently phrased; (3) the various decisions of the Mixed Armistice Commission. Bunche explicitly mentioned "local Arab police" and "Israeli police", not Jewish police, whereas Riley would make these terms synonymous.

As for the Arab lands, Sharett said that the Security Council could order certain action such as continuation of the work and ensuring compensation to landowners, while noting that nothing in that order should be construed as constituting a precedent regarding sovereignty in the area. The ambassador took note of Sharett's remarks.

At this stage of the conversation Davis raised the question of the U.S. grant-in-aid and the State Department's proposal on this matter.[7] He asked about Sharett's position, commenting that nobody liked the proposal. Sharett replied that Israel had never objected to a grant to the Arabs, too, for the purpose of helping them absorb the refugees, but there was no justice in an arbitrary equality in the size of the grants to Israel and the Arab countries. Each country should receive the grant appropriate to its needs and projects. Should it become clear that Israel deserves more than all the Arab countries together it should receive what it deserves. Davis noted that, according to the State Department's proposal, Israel would be given $25 million and the Arab countries would receive the same amount. Another $50 million would be used to resettle the refugees—a matter in which Israel, too, had an interest. Sharett said that the amount offered to Israel was only one-sixth of the original proposal submitted to Congress. Davis said that Israel had erred by not noting in its request that a significant portion of the grant would be used to pay compensation to the refugees. Thus Israel had aroused noisy opposition from the Arab countries, a matter that was liable to worsen relations in the Middle

East and further undermine its stability. The State Department had been obligated to oppose Israel's request. Sharett replied that Israel's request for $150 million was based on the country's minimum needs and there was no way of setting aside a significant portion of this for compensation. He rejected the ambassador's claim that the aid request was having a negative influence on relations in the area, claiming that the Arab countries' attitude towards Israel would have been no different even if it had not requested aid. As for the ambassador's comment that Israel would have made things easier for itself had it specified compensation of Arab refugees in the text of the application, Sharett answered that compensation is not an isolated problem and is tied to many factors. The ambassador said that in the tangled web of relations between Israel and the Arabs the question of compensation is a very important bargaining point, a kind of whip with which Israel can prod the Arabs towards peace. But only a concession on Israel's part would placate the Arabs. In his opinion, Israel is missing opportunities to place the Arabs in a politically uncomfortable position. Sharett disagreed with the ambassador's assessment. As evidence, he cited the Arab reaction to the Security Council resolution.[9] Although the entire resolution was phrased in a manner meant to appease the Arabs, and in only one section was there a paragraph noting the need to make peace with Israel, the Arab League Council had nevertheless announced that it would not comply with this provision in the Security Council resolution. It had even called for an intensification of the boycott against Israel and convened the chiefs of staff for military consultations. Sharett stressed that Israel had not passed up any opportunity to demonstrate its desire for peace and persisted in its efforts in this direction. He reminded the ambassador of Shiloah's trips to Amman[10] and their results.

At this point Sharett called Davis's attention to the situation of the Jews in Egypt. He reported on information that the Egyptian government was planning to expropriate Jewish property, noting the options available to the United States for checking out the situation at first hand and keeping track of developments, so that Israel and the Egyptian Jews would not be taken by surprise.

Davis asked the foreign minister what motivated the Egyptians to adopt a hard line on the Suez Canal. He found it hard to understand why precisely Egypt, with which Israel wanted to make peace and which had no genuine quarrel with Israel, was being so obstinate. Sharett agreed that there was no real conflict of interests between the two countries, but explained that Egypt was hoping that rallying the Arab world around it would allow it to increase the pressure on Great Britain and wring concessions about the treaty and the future of the Sudan.

On the instructions of his government, the ambassador inquired about Israel's position on Article 8 of the latest General Assembly resolution, known as "unity of peace". Sharett said that Israel supported the resolution and the principles of action against aggression enunciated therein, but that Israel's special situation should be noted. A heavy burden was imposed on Israel's army because of the absence of peace with the Arabs.

Notes

1. See report on the two meetings in No. 246.
2. See No. 244, n. 2.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 153, and No. 209.
4. See No. 244, n. 2.
5. The then British Prime Minister.
6. See *FRUS*, 1951, V, p. 737; cf. also the report on the present conversation, *ibid.*, pp. 742–43.
7. See No. 200.
8. See No. 85.
9. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
10. See, for example, No. 13 and n. 1 *ibid.*; No. 58 and n. 1 *ibid.*; No. 83; Editorial Note, pp. 79–80; and Nos. 132 and 145.
11. See No. 244, n. 1.

256. A. Eban to T. Lie. 6 July 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. See No. 246.
3. See No. 244, n. 2.
4. On 8 July, Riley submitted an additional report to the U.N. Secretary-General. He wrote about the agreement reached with Israel on 30 June concerning the return of the Arabs of the demilitarized zone and its implementation, adding a description of the differences of opinion between the U.N. observers and Israeli representatives during the mission and upon its completion (U.N. Document S/2234, 9 July 1951, 130.02/2433/9). The agreement had been reached at a meeting between Israeli and U.N. representatives on 29 June. See No. 246.

257. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions abroad. 8 July 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2377/1

Eytan provides instructions on how to present the Suez blockade so as

to ensure support for Israel during the forthcoming debate in the Security Council. He instructs his representatives to emphasize the following: (a) Egypt, by her action, acknowledges that, notwithstanding the Armistice Agreement, there is a state of war between herself and Israel. Riley has officially announced that the blockade of the Canal constitutes a hostile act contradictory to the spirit of the agreement and has demanded that Egypt lift the blockade.[1] (b) Despite the armistice, Egypt continues to prohibit the passage of so-called "contraband goods" to Israel. These include raw materials, fuel, etc. Furthermore, merchant ships passing through the Canal have been notified that they must present documents approved by Egyptian consuls certifying that no merchandise in their cargo holds is destined for Israel. They have also informed shipowners that any violation of the order would result in the blacklisting of the vessel and denial of future passage through the Canal to other vessels belonging to its owners. A ship's refusal to submit to inspection could, under Egyptian law, lead to the use of military force against it. (c) All of these constitute a serious affront to the freedom of commerce; their effect is particularly serious with regard to the world oil supply, especially in view of the current paralysis of the Iranian refineries.[2] (d) Egypt's action constitutes a violation of the Suez Canal Treaty of 1888, according to which even in wartime free passage through the Canal is not to be hindered in any way. The Egyptian action also contravenes the U.N. Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force in international relations. (e) Egypt's action is detrimental not only to Israeli trade but also to that of all other countries, because changes in shipping routes lead to a rise in prices. (f) The blockade is contributing to the instability and tension in the Middle East.

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 162.
2. See No. 244, n. 1.

258. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 8 July 1951

259. Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion and M. Sharett–Sir A. K. Helm. 9 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 138 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. Cf. report on the conversation in Ben-Gurion's diary, 9 July 1951, IMDEA.

260. W. Eytan to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations (Telegram). 9 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 256, n. 4.
2. Eytan reported on the completion of the referendum among the Arabs of Baqqara and Ghannama, who had been moved out of the demilitarized zone to Sha'ab. He stated that 420 wished to remain in Sha'ab, while 230 wanted to return. The transfer was fixed for 5 July. Eytan added the U.N. was disappointed with the results, since they wanted all the evacuees to be returned; he feared that they would try to return them by other means (telegram to the Israel Delegation in New York, 4 July 1951, 130.09/2330/2). On the attempts by U.N. observers to increase the number of those returning, see M. Hanegbi: "Summary of the Referendum and Transfer of Sha'ab Arabs to the Demilitarized Zone", 11 July 1951, 130.02/2433/9.

261. M. Sharett to W. E. Riley. 10 July 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. See No. 159.
3. See Riley's answer in No. 298.

262. S. Bendor [Tel Aviv] to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 11 July 1951

Orig.: 93.08/338/10

Bendor reports on Sharett's conversation with Davis on 2 July 1951.[1] The two spoke about the following topics: (1) The Jordan waters south of the Sea of Galilee. The ambassador asked for further details. In their previous conversation[2] Sharett had told him that the diminished flow resulted from the previous winter's drought, but he had now been informed that there were plans to divert water to Israel, a move that was liable to affect the water level on the eastern bank of the Jordan. Sharett replied that he had nothing to add to what he had said at the previous meeting. It was reasonable to assume that the diversion of the Yarmuk River waters by the Syrians had also affected the level of the Jordan. Sharett promised to submit a memorandum on this topic. (2) Syria's proposal for talks with Israeli representatives. Davis said that following their most recent conversation he had received a telegram from the State Department[3] presenting its posi-

tion on the Syrian initiative. The State Department considers this initiative a good augury. It indicates a change of values in the Arab world, since thus far no Arab country had been willing to negotiate with Israel. The State Department hopes that Israel will not close the door to talks with Syria and looks forward to the end of the Arab boycott of negotiations with Israel. Sharett replied that it was disappointing to see that the State Department had gained the impression that there was any topic which Israel was refusing to discuss. He stressed that Israel had never refused to discuss any topic, but the discussions had to take place within an appropriate framework and in appropriate circumstances. The Syrians had proposed a meeting between representatives of the foreign ministries and suggested that the agenda include all the questions pending before the Mixed Armistice Commission, with special emphasis on the demilitarized zone. Israel had replied that the proper locale for a discussion of matters on the commission's agenda was the commission itself. Any attempt to discuss these problems in some other forum was tantamount to undermining the commission. The Syrians were willing to discuss only the question of the demilitarized zone; in Israel's opinion consideration of this question divorced from the other problems would only weaken Israel's position. Israel was not prepared to cede any territory in the demilitarized zone. Israel would not budge from this position, so there was no point in embarking on deliberations that would end in deadlock. Such deliberations would not promote peace. The foreign minister added that Israel was disturbed by the State Department's tendency to view with favour the partitioning of the demilitarized zone. The idea had been raised in various unofficial talks held in the United States. The advocates seemed to believe that since no solution was in sight, Israel should submit to the Syrian demands, even if their only basis was Syrian rapacity. On the contrary, complying would only whet their appetite. The ambassador replied that the criticism of the United States policy was unjustified. He had no knowledge of an American attempt to pressure Israel into agreeing to territorial concessions. (3) Propaganda on behalf of peace with the Arab countries. The ambassador said that the time had come for Israel to launch a psychological offensive aimed at achieving peace with the Arab countries. Israeli broadcasts are listened to in the Arab countries and Israeli publications are read there. Without being overly conspicuous about it, it should be possible to make the Arabs realize that their own well-being required them to make peace with Israel. Action should be taken to calm the Arabs rather than agitating them by stressing their aggressive pronouncements. Many Arab leaders know that the current situation is harmful to Arab interests but lack the courage to say so publicly. Sharett agreed that Israel had given inadequate publicity to all its efforts on behalf of the country's Arab residents, out of fear that such publicity would encourage infiltration

and induce the refugees to demand forcefully their return to Israel instead of agreeing to absorption in the Arab countries. As for the idea of a psychological peace offensive, Sharett said that Israel had extended its hand to the Arab countries, and the results were well-known. Sharett asked the ambassador whether the U.S. government had reacted to the Syrian prime minister's announcement that his government would never make peace with Israel, or whether it had submitted a protest to the Arab governments which, in their conference in Damascus, had decided to step up the economic boycott of Israel. Davis replied that he had no information about this but would explore the matter with the State Department. Finally, Davis said that Israel was mistaken if it had the impression that the United States was "reprimanding" only Israel and not the Arab countries.

Notes

1. Thus in original. The meeting took place on 9 July; cf. report in *FRUS*, 1951, V, p. 757 and see also the telegram from the U.S. Division to the Israel Embassy in Washington, IWA597, 10 July 1951, 93.01/2207/19.
2. See No. 255.
3. See *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 752–53.
4. On 5 July 1951. Sharett spoke about Israel's aspirations for peace and the Arab countries' refusal to conclude an agreement with it "because they do not care about their peoples' situation and the situation in the Middle East". He drew attention to Israel's attempts to bring about peace and promised the refugees in the Nazareth area that there would soon be a satisfactory solution to their problem. Sharett was speaking at a reception held in his honour by the Nazareth Municipality. In his welcoming address to Sharett, the mayor expressed his pleasure at the Foreign Minister's visit, which would enable him "to see for himself the major improvements" that had taken place in the town since the establishment of the State, as well as its problems. He referred to Israeli Arabs' hopes for a settlement between the state and its neighbours, and asked the Israeli government to do its utmost to bring about peace (*Davar*, 8 July 1951).
5. See No. 261.

263. A. Eban to the President of the Security Council. 11 July 1951

Note

1. See Editorial Note, p. 162.

264. G. Rafael (New York) to M. Sharett. 11 July 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2384/21

Rafael responds to several reports and memoranda by Sharett: (1) First, to a report concerning negotiations with Riley on implementation of the Security Council resolution of 18 May.[1] He agrees with Sharett that the pulse of the Israeli public must be taken and that the justified trends of public opinion constitute a decisive factor in shaping the country's foreign policy. Rafael analyzes Riley's latest reactions and reaches the conclusion that he has decided to make an effort to achieve peace between Israel and the Arab countries. He is striving to abolish the Conciliation Commission and, in its stead, to expand his own powers so as to permit him to make progress from armistice agreements to a peace treaty. Riley understands that Israel is not prepared to make concessions, which is why he is trying to transfer to his sole authority disputed territories whose status has not yet been determined. He is trying to gain control over the demilitarized zone, is holding on to Mount Scopus, and is permitting the continued blockade of the Suez Canal. He is planning to propose partition of the demilitarized zone, to open the Suez Canal in exchange for an Egyptian right of passage through the Negev, and to permit Israel free access to Mount Scopus in exchange for a concession to Jordan in Jerusalem. Rafael argues that Riley has been infected with a "Bunche complex" and believes that he is destined to make peace in the Middle East. Danger lurks for Israel in his attitude on modification of the armistice agreements, which would lead to undermining what already exists without creating an alternative regime of peace. (2) Rafael's impression from Sharett's memorandum to Eban, dated 30 May,[4] is that Sharett has despaired of the prospects of peace with the Arabs in the near future, and that, in his opinion, as the U.N. grows weaker, the less danger will there be of its intervening in Israel's affairs. Rafael has reservations about Sharett's attitude. He believes that important international elements consider the refugee problem to be the central obstacle to peace between Israel and the Arabs. In Rafael's opinion, Israel should convince the Great Powers that the refugee problem is not one of the questions under dispute between Israel and the Arabs. The international community has to accept financial and political responsibility for resolving the problem. He compares the problem to that of the displaced persons in Germany after the war, when international bodies assumed responsibility for rehabilitating war refugees. The question of restoration of property and reparations had not been an obstacle to Germany's reestablishing relations with its former enemies. The Allies had decided that a resolution of the refugee problem

was beyond Germany's capacity. With regard to Israel the situation is better because Israel, unlike Germany, is not responsible for the refugee problem, which resulted from Arab aggression. Rafael proposes demanding that the Powers, and through them the U.N., remove the refugee problem from the agenda of the Arab-Israeli conflict and transform it into a question of international responsibility. He believes that the chances of peace between Israel and the Arabs will improve the moment the Powers announce a comprehensive plan for solving the problem. He reminds Sharett that even the Arab League, on 2 February, had adopted a resolution that Arab governments would not agree to resettle the refugees outside Palestine so long as no comprehensive plan existed (see Main Volume, p. 464). Rafael suggests that, contrary to Sharett's attitude, it would be beneficial if several U.N. agencies acting in the Middle East were merged so that they could collaborate on the refugee issue, in the spirit of his proposal. (3) Rafael writes that Sharett's reports on his talks with members of the Conciliation Commission[7] attest to the existence of an atmosphere of trust and a desire to work together. From a conversation he had had with Barco[8] Rafael was impressed by the sincere desire of the Americans on the Conciliation Commission for the advancement of peace in cooperation with Israel while taking its interests into account. (4) From two telegrams of A. Eban[9] and a report of the meeting between Sharett and foreign ministry staff,[10] Rafael learns that he is in complete agreement with them as to the tactics to be adopted on the urgent questions of the Hula Valley and the Suez Canal. Rafael stresses that the international situation, and especially the tension in Iran, hinder Israeli action. There is special sensitivity against expanding the ambit of the conflict and especially against any step liable to provoke the Arabs into rash conduct. He also believes that the American attitude in the Iranian dispute reflects the first stage in a process of U.S. entrenchment in the Middle East. Special attention should be paid to this fact. On this topic, he calls Sharett's attention to the interview with McGhee in *U.S. News and World Report* on 29 June 1951. (See Main Volume, pp. 465–66.)

Notes

1. See memorandum by Sharett on the sequence of events in the Hula affair after the Security Council resolution, 17 June 1951, 93.03/3008/5. See also Editorial Note, p. 140.
2. See Editorial Note, pp. 149–51.
3. One paragraph has been omitted here.
4. Untraced.
5. A consultation on Israeli relations with Arab countries, scheduled for early August. See Eytan to Yadin, 1 July 1951, 130.15/2570/7.

6. John Blandford, from July 1951 director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (formerly U.S. representative on the agency's advisory committee). See No. 369.
7. See No. 214. See also Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 300, 26 June 1951, 93.03/3055/14.
8. The meeting took place on 2 July. Barco criticized the State Department's instructions to members of the American delegation to the Conciliation Commission not to adopt an initiative but to "sit back and wait" and expressed his opinion "that this policy has a negative influence on the parties and makes the chances of peace more remote." He left for Washington in order to get the State Department to formulate a decisive policy on the question of peace between Israel and the Arab countries. He stressed that recognition was growing at the State Department that the international situation was getting steadily worse and that confusion reigned with respect to American policy in the region. Within the department, the spirit of appeasement was spreading; he advised Israel to ask Acheson to clarify the department's attitude towards Israel. In his opinion it was possible to reach an understanding with the State Department on the issues of peace. He proposed that the Conciliation Commission submit to the Arabs, "as an act of mediation", a proposal that had been planned with and accepted in advance by Israel, on the assumption that direct proposals by Israel would merely whet the Arabs' thirst for bargaining. Rafael proposed considering Barco's idea (11 July 1951, 130.02/2384/21).
9. See No. 247.
10. See Editorial Note, p. 176–77.
11. See No. 45, n. 2.

265. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 12 July 1951

Notes

1. Eban offered initial thoughts about the Powers' note on the subject of reparations. See Eban's telegram to Sharett, 8 July 1951, 93.01/2207/19.
2. See No. 254 and Editorial Note, p. 188.
3. Benjamin Joseph Buttenwieser, assistant to the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany.
4. See Editorial Note, pp. 287–88, and No. 403.

266. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 12 July 1951

Notes

1. Jean-Pierre Benard, First Secretary at the French Embassy in Washington.
2. See No. 253 and n. 2 *ibid.*
3. In another report on the meeting, Keren recounted that Benard had told him of the French peace initiative and expressed disappointment at the State Department's lukewarm response. He voiced criticism of the Americans' total passivity about the

problem of peace in the Middle East and spoke with a sense of utter pessimism about the chances for peace in the region (18 July 1951, 93.08/337/18).

267. A. Kubovy[1] (Prague) to the East European Division. 12 July 1951

Coded Tel. P158; Inc.: 130.09/2343/1

Kubovy reports on a conversation with the president of Czechoslovakia, with the participation of the foreign minister, the president's aide-de-camp, and the chief of protocol. (1) Kubovy raised the question of the *aliya* of relatives.[2] The president was taken aback and said that the government had already given an affirmative answer on this issue. He turned to the foreign minister, who explained that certain forms were not yet ready. After an exchange in Czech between the foreign minister and the president, the latter said that to the best of his recollection the financial transfer issue had hindered a settlement of the immigration problem. Kubovy answered that Israel was not a rich country, but would not allow financial considerations to delay matters of sentiment and conscience. At the end of the conversation the president promised to find an acceptable settlement. (2) The president touched on the issue of trade relations between Israel and Czechoslovakia, which were at a standstill. Kubovy replied that the reason for this failure was being studied by a joint committee and that Israel would do all it could so as to reach a second agreement that would be more successful than its predecessor. (3) On the Suez issue, the president said that the only solution was to expel the British army from the Canal. Kubovy answered that Israel had already made its contribution towards the expulsion of the British, and was not keeping Egypt from doing the same, but at the moment the problem was opening the international traffic lanes, which is one precondition for world peace.

Kubovy added that the conversation had been longer than was usual and that he had parted from the president in a very cordial manner.

Notes

1. Arieh L. Kubovy, from July 1951 Israel minister to Poland and Czechoslovakia. In the present telegram Kubovy describes the ceremony at which he presented his credentials to the Czechoslovak president.
2. On this subject, see Doron's talk with the Czech chief of protocol on 29 May 1951. The chief of protocol ascribed the delay in *aliya* to bureaucratic reasons and requested that the Israeli representatives demonstrate forbearance until the foreign minister

issued instructions to begin implementation (Doron's telegram to the East European Division, 101, 29 May 1951, 130.09/2342/16).

268. A. Lourie to W. Eytan (Telegram). 12 July 1951

Notes

1. Ilhan Savut, adviser to the Turkish Permanent Delegation at the United Nations and alternate representative on the Security Council.
2. See the memorandum entitled "Restriction Imposed by Egypt on the Passage of Ships through the Suez Canal", 10 July 1951, 93.08/358/28.
3. On 11 July, the Iranian Consulate in Israel issued a press release on the closure of the consulate in Tel Aviv. The Iranian press explained the closure as the result of budgetary considerations, but in the Foreign Ministry the move was ascribed to the influence of Iranian religious leaders on the government and on the regime's need for Arab support. (See Bendor to the Israel Embassy in Washington, 15 July 1951, 93.03/3044/1. See also No. 222.)
4. See Rafael's telegram to Eytan X173, 13 July 1951, and Lourie's telegram to Eytan, X174, 13 July 1951, 130.09/2330/3. Both reported on Israeli lobbying activities at the U.N. in advance of the forthcoming debate on Suez.

269. W. Eytan to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations (Telegram). 13 July 1951

Notes

1. For a report on the conversation, see Eliashiv's telegram to Eytan, PI708, 10 July 1951, 130.09/2325/6.
2. In a telegram to the East European Division, P157, 11 July 1951, 130.09/2343/1.
3. Jacob Tsur, Israel minister to Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, and Paraguay.
4. Levi A. Allon, First Secretary and Israel consul in Uruguay.
5. See Fischer's telegrams to Avner, PTA206, PTA207, 12 July 1951, 130.09/2344/7.

270. A. Eban to the United States Division (Telegram). 13 July 1951

Notes

1. Senator Tom Connally (Democrat, Texas), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.
2. James P. Richards (Democrat), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.
3. For more details of Feinberg's meeting with Truman, see Kollek's telegram to the U.S. Division, W205, 12 July 1951, 93.01/2207/19. See also the State Department's recommendations for the meeting in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 774–76.
4. Senator Walter F. George (Democrat).

271. A. Eban to G. C. McGhee. 16 July 1951

Notes

1. See Nos. 225 and 258.
2. See Vol. 5, No. 248.
3. See Vol. 5, No. 510, and No. 156 above.
4. See No. 239 and n. 4 *ibid.*
5. See McGhee's answer in No. 319.

272. A. Eban (Washington) to M. Sharett. 16 July 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2410/21

Eban reports on a conversation with Yakov Malik, the Soviet representative at the U.N., on 4 July. Gideon Rafael also took part. He writes that the very fact that the conversation took place had aroused special interest in U.N. circles because, since the fateful broadcast of 26 June,[1] Malik had staunchly abstained from any political discussions with his colleagues at the U.N. He had rejected approaches by the U.S. and British representatives and had even turned away Thomas Hamilton, the dean of the journalists covering the United Nations. Eban surmises that Malik's willingness to talk with him arose from his desire to sound out reactions to and impressions of the effect that his speech had in the United States and the United Nations without having to add any further clarification to his declaration.

Eban told Malik that Israel was firm in its intention to raise the blockade of the Suez Canal in the Security Council. He said that once Riley had defined the blockade as an aggressive action and had requested Egypt to end this unacceptable procedure,[2] Israel had no alternative but to raise the issue with the agency responsible for world security. Eban expressed confidence that the Soviet Union would join in the effort to end the blockade of the Canal. Malik agreed with Eban and sought to clarify what damage was being done to Israel's economy as a result of the blockade. Eban explained the problem of the oil refineries and Israel's desire to establish commercial relations with the countries of Africa and Asia, but stressed that the problem was not merely an economic one. The central issue was whether it was permitted or forbidden to perpetrate hostile and aggressive actions two years after the signing of the armistice agreements. Malik agreed with this point, but added that Israel had to take into account Egypt's wish for independence. Rafael stressed Israel's sensitivity concerning the removal of foreign forces and Eban again stressed that even after the British forces left Egypt the latter would still have to honour its inter-

national commitments. Malik agreed. (Rafael and Eban were under the impression that the Soviet Union would not take part in Security Council debates and would abstain in the vote. Eban adds that in the debates on this issue in August 1949 and November 1950 the Soviet Union had not rushed to defend Egypt when harsh criticism was leveled against it for closing the Canal to Israeli shipping.)

Malik asked Eban to survey the status of the Israeli-Syrian dispute. He asked whether the Security Council resolution of 18 May[3] did not constitute a negative turning point in Britain's relations with Israel. Malik added that the resolution had led to a deterioration in the situation since the Arabs had received support for their extreme position.

After the talk about Middle Eastern affairs, Malik asked about the Korean War and the chances for peace. Eban answered that in Washington one could sense a strong desire for an end to the fighting in Korea and that the American people had breathed a sigh of relief when Malik's speech had opened a doorway to peace. Malik said that his latest speech had won considerable acclaim in America and that he had received many letters of encouragement from all parts of the country. He added that, unlike the masses, "the ruling circles" in the United States were afraid of peace because it would lead to a reduction in armaments production. The remainder of the conversation revolved around the chances for peace in Korea.

Eban understood from what Malik said at the end of the discussion that he was about to wind up his tenure in New York. Eban writes to Sharett that this would bring to a close a most interesting chapter in Israel-Soviet relations. According to him, over the past three years Malik had displayed consistent sympathy for Israel and uncommon interest in its development. The *rapprochement* between Israel and the West and its support for several anti-Soviet resolutions had not affected Malik's attitude. After Israel's admission to the United Nations, Malik had held both general and more specific discussions with Eban and Rafael; during periods when Eban was unable to meet him because of the press of work, Malik had sought ways to express his disappointment at that and to renew their contact. In Eban's opinion, there was no indication that the Soviet Union no longer respected Israel.

Notes

1. Thus in original. But the reference is to Malik's speech on U.N. Radio on 23 June, in which he proposed talks on a Korean cease-fire and armistice as the war entered its second year.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 162.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 140.

273. Y. Tekoah (Tel Aviv) to the Bureau of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. 16 July 1951

Copy: 93.02/164/8

Tekoah writes that the falsehood in Egypt's stand on the blockade of the Suez Canal had been laid bare when it stopped the British ship *Empire Roach.*[1] The interception of the vessel by an Egyptian warship had revealed the Egyptians' true colours in the Suez affair. They had no intention of honouring their commitments according to the armistice agreement, and even less so their commitment under the Constantinople Convention and the U.N. Charter. In Tekoah's opinion, this episode shows that the Egyptians are engaged in a broad campaign of aggressive and warlike acts against Israel and that the arguments they present on the Suez question merely serve as an opportunistic veil and distortion of the truth.

Notes

1. On 1 July the Egyptian forces detained the British ship *Empire Roach* at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba. The ship was searched and allowed to continued on its way after about 24 hours. The Egyptians claimed that they had recently proclaimed a ban on shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba in order to prevent the smuggling of goods to the port of Eilat and that the British had not obeyed. (See details on the affair in Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 315, 13 July 1951, 130.02/2418/18.)
2. See Editorial Note, p. 162.
3. Wahid Raf'at Bey, legal adviser to the Egyptian delegation to the Mixed Armistice Commission.

274. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 16 July 1951

Notes

1. On the same day, Jebb met Eban and showed him sections of the British draft resolution. He told him that France and the Netherlands would also sponsor the resolution, but the United States had not yet decided whether to do so. His assessment of the vote tally at the Security Council was similar to that given by Younger to Elath (Lourie's telegram to Sharett, X181, 16 July 1951, 93.01/2203/11).
2. In another telegram, Elath expressed apprehension that despite Younger's sincere promises, the Foreign Office was vacillating as to whether the time was ripe for Security Council action on the Suez issue. He saw the sources of the vacillation in a fear of adopting measures against Egypt that would directly link the Israeli and British complaints; in the poor timing of taking anti-Egypt steps at the same time as talks were being conducted with that country; and in the situation in Iran. Elath

advised carefully following British activity in New York and Washington. (Elath's telegram to Comay, 17 July 1951, 130.09/2319/1)

275. S. Eliashiv (Moscow) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 17 July 1951

Coded Tel. PI718; Inc.: 130.09/2325/6

Eliashiv reports on a conversation with Gromyko. He writes that the talk was more lively than usual and focused on Gromyko's questions and comments. The following subjects were discussed: (a) Suez. After the Israeli position had been presented, Gromyko commented that from the standpoint of international law there is some basis to the Egyptian claim that a state of war exists between it and Israel, while on the other hand it is hard to say that its acts are of a military nature, since they are carried out by customs officials. To Eliashiv, this sounded like his talk with Bazarov.[1] Gromyko inquired about the U.S. and British positions. Eliashiv offered the opinion that Britain would support the Israeli position but did not know what the American attitude would be. (b) Emigration of relatives. Eliashiv said that family reunification permits would be deeply appreciated in Israel. In answer to Gromyko's question, he made it clear that there would be a considerable number of such requests. Gromyko explained that the matter was very complicated because it concerned Soviet citizens. It would not be possible to consider requests submitted *en masse*. He himself could not give an answer without studying the material, and the department concerned would have to deal with it. Eliashiv mentioned cases in which a favourable reply had been received, as if inferring from this that there was no fundamental opposition on the part of the authorities. He asked Gromyko to investigate the matter and give him a speedy and favourable answer. Gromyko said that he was prepared to receive Eliashiv at any time. (c) He promised to look into the matter of a permit for Namir's mother.[2] At the end of the conversation Eliashiv said that he saw his function as facilitating mutual explanation of the positions of both parties in order to improve the good relations between the two countries. Gromyko wished him success and said that there was no reason why relations between the two should not be normal. Eliashiv says that the entire conversation had been marked by Gromyko's warmth and attentiveness. He mentioned his acquaintance with Ben-Gurion, Sharett, and Eban. Eliashiv asks that the fact of the conversation, but not its content, be made public in Israel.[3]

Notes

1. See No. 269, n. 1.
2. Mordecai Namir, Israeli Minister to the Soviet Union until November 1950.
3. A detailed report on the conversation and on the meeting with the head of the consular section of the Soviet Foreign Ministry can be found in S. Eliashiv, Report No. 4, 25 July 1951, 130.11/2493/9.

276. A. Lourie to M. Sharett (Telegram). 17 July 1951

Note

1. On the next day, Eban had lunch with L. Jones. Jones said that the U.S. position on Suez was moving in the direction desired by Israel and that in a matter of days a decision would be taken to submit a joint text with Britain and France. Later they discussed the elections in Israel and the prospects of peace with the Arabs. Jones criticized the orthodox Israeli approach that would defer any discussion with the Arabs until peace talks and counseled Israel to try a different tack, which would basically consist of unilateral Israeli measures (a free port in Haifa, a road across the Negev, etc.). In particular he proposed that Israel agree to talks with the Syrians on any subject whatsoever. Evidently it was following this meeting that Eban sent the telegram in No. 278 below. (For details of the meeting, see *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 777–79.)

277. Meeting: E. Herlitz and S. Hyman–J. Waldo (Washington, 14 July 1951, document dated 17 July 1951)

Report: 93.08/337/18

Herlitz asked Waldo to clarify why permits for the export of arms to Israel had been held up despite McGhee's promises to Eban.[2] She said that it was unreasonable that at a time when Israel was proposing various fields for military cooperation to the U.S. government, export permits for the I.D.F. should be held up. She complained that what was involved were old types of weapons for which Israel had always received permits; in one case it was simply a question of a permit that had expired and had to be renewed. Waldo confirmed that the permits had been delayed because of the tense situation in the Hula and because of Riley's reports, which indicated that the problem had not yet been resolved. He said that even when they start issuing the permits it would be a bit-by-bit affair, since according to the Tripartite Agreement no country in the region could receive an excessive quantity of armaments at one time. He added that it was the Americans who had approved the sale of 20 aircraft to Israel by France. The

planes, which had already reached Israel, were released after there had been a certain improvement in the Hula dispute. Permits for the Syrians and Egyptians had also been held up. According to Waldo, McGhee was aware of these matters and it was possible that he had forgotten about them in his talk with Eban. Herlitz said that the explanation did not satisfy her and that she would state as much to Eban, who might wish to take further steps.

On the Hula issue, Herlitz complained that Riley had published a report condemning Israel[3] and had not published the report[4] on the return of the Sha'ab Arabs. Waldo said that it was better this way because the second report had not spared Israel either. He read to her parts of the report in which there were many accounts of disputes with the U.N. observers.

Waldo claimed that it was unfortunate that Israel had not responded favourably to the Syrians' invitation to meet them. He said that even if nothing had come of the talks, at least there would have been the impression that Israel had made a peaceful gesture and the Syrians had refused. Now the impression had been created that for the first time an Arab country had proposed unofficial talks with Israel and it had refused. Herlitz said that Israel had not refused but had merely asked that an agenda for the talks be agreed upon. Israel also knew that the Syrians would advance a claim for partition of the demilitarized zone—a claim that Israel could not accept—so there was no point in talks. Waldo did not agree with this argument, repeating that it was in Israel's interest to meet the Syrians.

In light of the conversation, Herlitz proposed that the Foreign Ministry mount a political offensive and formally notify the State Department that Israel would agree to talks with the Syrians after a settlement of the question of the demilitarized zone had been achieved. In her opinion, even if these talks had no results the very fact that they were held would be beneficial. She asked the Foreign Ministry's opinion of her proposal.

Notes

1. Hartwell Johnson, formerly U.S. consul in Cairo; from January 1951 posted in the State Department.
2. See No. 258.
3. See No. 244, n. 2.
4. See No. 256, n. 4.
5. Denis A. Greenhill, First Secretary at the British Embassy in Washington.
6. See No. 262 and n. 1 *ibid.*

278. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 18 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 276, n. 1.
2. In reply, Eytan cabled that Israel intended to submit to Syria a counter-proposal for the agenda; notification of this would be sent to Davis (Eytan's telegram to Israel Embassy in Washington, IW6, 20 July 1951, 130.09/2308/21).

279. E. Sasson (Ankara) to M. Sharett. 18 July 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2382/2

Sasson responds to Eban's letter on the Security Council debate and to Sharett's comments on the letter.[1] He replies to Sharett's comment about the major shock produced in the Arab states by the establishment of Israel and the political and emotional difficulty they had in coming to terms with this phenomenon. Sasson claims that since the signing of the armistice agreements there has been no progress towards establishing normal neighbourly relations with Israel and there are even many signs of preparations for "a second round". In his opinion, the situation today is such that the Arab countries are lying in ambush for Israel, doing everything in their power to weaken it and waiting for the right moment to destroy it. They have declared an economic boycott of Israel, have attempted to impede development works in the north and south, and even the approval of the exodus of Iraqi Jews was intended to generate a social and economic crisis with destructive implications for Israel. Sasson agrees that these phenomena are a result of the shock that descended upon the Arabs with the establishment of the state, but claims that the intrigues woven against Israel in the Arab world should not always be seen purely as the fruit of ill will or as an inevitable decree of fate. In his opinion, in several cases Israel's mistakes had caused Arab ill will. One of these had been placing the armistice commissions under military supervision. In Sasson's opinion, these commissions are the principal arena of contact with the Arabs, and this front is more of a political than a military nature. During the three years of their existence, the armistice commissions had managed to erect a barrier between Israel and the Arabs instead of achieving a *rapprochement*. Their approach to various matters, their manner of explanation, etc., have proved to the Arabs that Israel was extremist, devious, and aggressive, entertaining ulterior motives and far-reaching objectives. Sasson believes that military personnel willingly and unhesitatingly accept assignment as the staff

officer responsible for armistice affairs "and rely on their only implement—power." Sasson is convinced that if military personnel alone had had to conduct the Rhodes talks no agreements would ever have been signed. He is certain that much can be done in Israel to mitigate the Arabs' desire for revenge. He proposes reorganizing the armistice commissions in such a way that their main sphere of operation would fall in the context of Foreign Ministry activity and greater weight would be given to the political aspect. He calls on the Foreign Ministry to call attention to the mistakes and seek to remedy them.

Note

1. See No. 249 and n. 1 *ibid.*

280. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 19 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 253, n. 2.
2. Wells Stabler, in charge of Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan Affairs at the State Department.
3. See No. 159.

281. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 19 July 1951

Coded Tel. MTA18; Inc.: 93.01/2207/19

Eytan presents arguments against those claiming that the time is not appropriate to bring up the Suez question: (a) The blockade has gone on for two and a half years, and there is no point in waiting any longer. (b) Diplomatic measures adopted by ten countries towards Egypt over the past two years have not been successful, and there is no point in further attempts. (c) Israel has tried everything before approaching the Security Council, but after Riley himself said the issue must be brought before the Council, there is no other way of bringing about the lifting of the blockade.

Note

1. See Editorial Note, p. 162.

282. A. Kubovy (Warsaw) to the East European Division. 20 July 1951

Coded Tel. BI346; Inc.: 130.09/2306/4

Kubovy reports on the ceremony at which he presented his credentials to the President of Poland. He had been asked to submit the text of his speech in advance, and had been forced to delete any reference to continued *aliya*. The Poles claimed that this was a subject for negotiations, not for an agreed-upon courtesy speech. His speech and that of the President were published in full in *Trybuna Ludu*. His conversation with the President lasted over twenty minutes and was rather cordial until Kubovy brought up the issue of *aliya*. In this context the President said that no country had contributed more immigrants to Israel than Poland, that too many people were coming and going from Israel, and that the subject required thorough consideration. Kubovy assumes that Israel is facing a difficult battle and that there is a need for extensive, thorough information work at the highest echelons of the party and the government. Only a few Jews were present at the ceremony; many others were afraid to attend.

Note

1. At the presentation of his credentials to the Polish president.

283. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 21 July 1951

Notes

1. See Vol. 5, pp. 593–94.
2. 20 July 1951, 93.08/339/1.

284. United States Division (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 22 July 1951

Coded Tel. IWA620; Outg.: 130.09/2308/21

Sharett summoned the U.S. Ambassador[1] and informed him of the following matters: (a) The Jordan waters: Sharett had issued instructions for a proposal to the Jordanian government to discuss with Israel a settlement concerning the Jordan River and fresh water supply for Sodom and the potash works. The reasons for this move were

sent in a separate telegram.[2] (b) Suez: Sharett expressed Israel's concern about United States vacillation, in contrast to its activity in the Hula affair. Israel expected the United States to be a party to the British decision and also to influence wavering countries. (c) The Gulf of Aqaba: Contrary to what it had told Caffery,[3] Egypt now states that it has the right to detain ships en route to Israel. Egypt cannot claim that only customs officials are involved, because this case involves military forces. This is a violation of the Armistice Agreement, according to Riley's ruling.[4] (d) Sharett provided Davis with a copy of the draft agenda Israel had presented to Syria.[5] (e) He also gave him a copy of Taxis' letter to Horowitz,[6] which marks an extreme deviation from Riley's policy.

Davis replied as follows: (1) Suez: He tried to allay Sharett's concern. He said he had already anticipated the issues Sharett had raised, and had informed his government of them by telegram.[8] He would send another telegram in Sharett's name.[9] He added that the United States had already reacted vigorously in Cairo, and had left no doubt that the outcome of the Security Council debate would be serious if Egypt itself failed to rectify the situation. He went on to argue that Israel itself was not faithfully observing decisions of the Security Council and of Riley, such as the police in the demilitarized zone and the return of the Arabs to the zone. (2) Taxis' letter came to him as a shock and left him speechless. He abruptly ended the talk and left.

Notes

1. The meeting took place on 20 July. See the detailed report in the memorandum from S. Bendor, 24 July 1951, 93.08/338/10. See also Eban's telegram to Sharett, W219, 17 July 1951, 93.01/2207/19.
2. See the telegram from the Foreign Ministry to the Israel mission in New York, 22 July 1951, 93.01/2203/11. Sharett informed Davis of the connection between the Naharayim power plant and the possibility of increased salinity of the Jordan waters, but claimed that the blame fell on the government of Jordan, which refused to activate the power plant. He rejected the claim that the drainage of the Hula interfered with the flow of the Jordan River and told Davis that there was no reason to bring the matter before the Security Council since there was no question here of any violation of the peace, international law, or the armistice agreement, but rather a matter to be settled between two neighbouring countries.
3. See Vol. 5, No. 89.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 162.
5. Compare No. 286.
6. Taxis informed Nahum Horwitz of the Israel Land Development Corporation of Riley's position—that the Hula drainage works on state land in the region, including the Jordan channel, had to stop until their status had been decided (18 July 1951, 130.02/2433/9).
7. On 2 May 1951.

8. See *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 767–68.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 787–89.

285. A. Levavi (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legation in Moscow. 22 July 1951

Coded Tel. IP541; Outg.: 130.09/2325/6

Levavi presents arguments countering Gromyko's position on the Suez issue:[1] (a) Egypt had never declared war on Israel, and was therefore not in a state of war with it. (b) Upon invading Israel, Egypt explicitly stated that it was engaging not in war but simply in a police action meant to protect the Arabs of Palestine. (c) Egypt's attack on Israel was a violation of international law, and Egypt cannot rely on such law in the present affair. (d) The U.N. Charter prohibits a legal state of war between U.N. members. (e) The claim that action by customs officials does not constitute an act of belligerency is not valid. The Egyptians themselves claim that the blockade is an act of war that the Armistice Agreement does not proscribe because it is not being executed by military forces. The Egyptian argument distorts the spirit of the Agreement. Under this kind of interpretation, an Egyptian in civilian dress may bomb Tel Aviv from a civilian aircraft.

Levavi instructed the Israel legation to present the Soviet Foreign Ministry with a memorandum listing the arguments included in the telegram.[2]

Notes

1. See No. 275, and n. 3 *ibid.*
2. See translation from Russian of Eliashiv's letter to Gromyko and the accompanying memorandum, 24 July 1951, 93.03/3006/2.

286. S. Divon (Tel Aviv) to Y. Harkabi. 23 July 1951

Copy: 130.02/2433/9

Divon communicates the text of Israel's draft agenda for a meeting with the Syrians, as follows: (1) The settlement of outstanding issues in the spirit of the Security Council resolutions of 16 November 1948, 11 August 1949, and 18 May 1951, and the Israel-Syria General Armistice Agreement. (2) Cooperation between the local authorities

on each side on matters of mutual concern such as: public security, health, agriculture, etc. (3) The question of economic relations between Syria and Israel. (4) Other questions agreed upon by the two parties.

Divon, speaking for Eytan, orders that Hanegbi be instructed to inform the Syrians immediately of Israel's draft agenda, to report immediately on his having done so, and to send the Ministry a copy of the letter sent to the Syrians.[1] Divon requests immediate action.

Note

1. Because of additional debates, the agenda was not transmitted to the Syrians until 3 August. See No. 302 and nn. 3 and 4 *ibid.*

287. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to S. Divon. 23 July 1951

Memorandum: 130.15/2570/7

Eytan responds to Divon's memorandum entitled "Our Policy towards the Arabs—Problems for Consultation"[1]: (1) Eytan thinks there is no need at this stage to take so far-reaching a view of Israel-Arab relations. In his opinion, the issue at hand is a group of countries on the verge of revolution whose course is hard to predict. A case in point is Abdallah's assassination,[2] which occurred after the memorandum was drawn up and already invalidated some of its provisions and conclusions. (2) Israel's objective is to establish sound relations with Arab countries, and the entire debate centres on how to achieve such relations. Some people in Israel believe that peace and security can be obtained only by war. The Foreign Ministry does not accept this opinion, and must therefore consider how to attain the goal by peaceful means such as persuasion, information, negotiations, etc. (3) The rulers of the Arab countries are not inclined to accept Israel's existence or to respond to its peaceful overtures. Therefore, they have to be motivated to do this. The question is how to force the leaders of Arab countries to recognize Israel, or how to replace them with new leaders holding different opinions. (4) Eytan proposes that Israel launch a political offensive at once, along the following lines: Israel should (a) issue overt peace proposals to each of the Arab countries separately; sustain its pressure and continue the international debate irrespective of the reaction; and avoid being swayed or deterred by fear that its pressure may strengthen the Arab claim that Israel needs peace more than the Arabs do, and that time is working in their

favour; (b) mount a vigorous campaign in the international arena, in particular within the United Nations and the press, against the Arab nations for their conduct towards Israel in U.N. institutions, and their refusal to reach an accord with Israel. (5) Eytan suggests that Israel strengthen its ties with countries such as Turkey, India, Indonesia, Burma, Siam, Ethiopia, and, if possible, also with Iran, the Sudan, Pakistan, Ceylon, China, Greece, Afghanistan, and Libya. He acknowledges the intrinsic difficulties of such a campaign, but recommends that no effort be spared. (6) Eytan proposes that all conduct of Israel's Arab policy be entrusted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He accepts Divon's proposal to set up a "general staff" within the Foreign Ministry, endowed with supreme authority in these matters. Eytan adds that the entire apparatus for dealing with the Arab problems needs overhauling. The relationship between the Foreign Ministry and the Army has to be examined, as does the connection between Israel's policy towards its own Arab minority and towards the Arab world in general. There is a need to coordinate military operations, information activities, the work of the armistice commissions, the Hula drainage project, water policy, Bedouin policy, etc. Eytan believes that without centralized management of all these issues, there is little hope of effectively implementing policy. (7) Eytan believes his proposals must be implemented if there is to be any chance of carrying out the proposals Divon spelled out in his memorandum. At the same time, he points out the importance of Divon's proposal to establish a full Arabic-language programme on Israel Radio. Eytan thinks such a programme will further Israel's information efforts in Arab countries and will help exert favourable influence on the Arab leadership.

Notes

1. The memorandum of 24 July 1951, in File 130.15/2570/7.
2. King Abdallah was assassinated in the Old City of Jerusalem on 20 July as he was about to enter the Al-Aqsa Mosque for Friday prayers. For the political significance of the assassination, see No. 289.

288. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 23 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 284, n. 6.
2. See No. 244, n. 2.

289. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions Abroad. 24 July 1951

Coded Tel. MTA27; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Sharett analyzes the political significance of Abdallah's assassination[1] in an initial briefing of Israel's representatives abroad. He writes that the assassination may well mark the beginning of turbulence and upheaval in the Middle East and on Israel's borders. If it is true, as has been assumed, that the long arm of the Mufti struck down his enemy, then the assassination must be seen as the first stage in a plan to establish premeditated and long-term *faits accomplis*. The Mufti has succeeded not only in eliminating an enemy but also in making room for himself. Sharett points out the sweeping changes that have occurred in the internal social and political structure of the Kingdom of Jordan upon the transfer of authority and influence from the Trans-jordanian element to the Palestinian element; these changes will certainly influence events after the assassination. He mentions possible Arab Legion and British influence, as well as reactions by Egypt or Syria. Sharett believes that even if the assassination is not the result of a long-standing conspiracy, the elimination of the personality who served as the central pivot of a complex political structure, as a brake on dangerous tendencies, and as a prop for Western influence, is liable to trigger a process of disintegration whose outcome is hard to foresee. Israel must prepare for any eventuality. Israel must articulate to the world its dread of a possible deterioration on its eastern border in the event of political violence in Jordan, or in the event that either Iraq or Syria try to take control of that country.

Notes

1. See No. 287, n. 2.
2. Talal, Abdallah's son, reigned from September 1951 to August 1952.
3. Na'if ibn Abdallah ibn Hussein, Abdallah's second son. Na'if was declared regent of Jordan immediately after his father's assassination. He held power until September 1951.

290. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 25 July 1951

Note

1. For a full report on the meeting, see Elath's letter to Comay, 27 July 1951, 130.13/2582/4.

291. M. Comay to E. Elath (Telegram). 25 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 284 and n. 2 *ibid.*
2. See No. 286.
3. Cf. No. 289.

292. Meeting: E. Herlitz and M. Keren–G. Lewis[1] (Washington, 20 July 1951, document dated 26 July 1951)

Report: 93.03/3028/10

The talk, held at the initiative of Israel's representatives, focused on the question of German reparations. First, Lewis apologized for the negative response to the Israeli letter.[2] He said that Israel's only chance of success on the issue of reparations was through direct talks with the Germans. When asked by Israel's representatives whether the Americans would agree to mediate between Israel and the Germans, he replied that he assumed this to be the case, although he refused to make any official commitment. He gave the same answer when Israel's representatives asked him whether the United States would be prepared to elicit an explicit declaration from Adenauer to the effect that he was willing to hold discussions with Israel and bring the entire affair to a conclusion. Israel's representatives asked whether the Occupation Powers would permit implementation of a reparations agreement if Israel managed to reach one with the Germans. Lewis replied that he could not see how the Occupation Powers could oppose such an agreement between the two countries, even if it meant a reduction in Germany's hard currency income. He stated that the Germans were interested in penetrating international markets. He confirmed that the Germans were holding trade negotiations with Egypt, and added that in this sense they might be interested in a settlement with Israel, too.

At the end of the document, Keren and Herlitz express their personal opinion that Israel will be unable to further the German reparations issue without direct talks with the Germans. They hope the Americans will support such a step.

Notes

1. Geoffrey Lewis, deputy director of the Bureau of German Affairs in the Department of State.

2. See No. 254.
3. See No. 238 and n. 3 ibid.

Editorial Note

The Security Council debate on Israel's complaint against the Egyptian blockade of the Suez Canal

Discussion of Israel's complaint (No. 263) began on 26 July and was continued over several sessions until 1 September. The representatives of Israel, Egypt and Iraq were invited to participate without the right to vote. At the first session, Eban opened the debate by presenting Israel's position. He was answered by the Egyptian delegate, Mahmud Fawzi, who claimed that there was no basis for opposing the Egyptian blockade, neither according to international law nor international custom. He asserted that the armistice agreements put an end to hostilities but not to a state of war; in closing the Canal Egypt was exercising the lawful rights of a belligerent. At the Council session of 1 August, the British delegate supported Israel's complaint. He explained that Egypt's claim that it was in a state of war with Israel was unacceptable; the restrictions in the Canal contravened the spirit of the armistice and were tantamount to an act of hostile aggression. (See No. 299.) Only gradually did the United States and France align themselves with Britain's stance, and manage to agree on a draft resolution to be proposed to the Assembly. The next Council session, however, was postponed several times as a result of attempts to prevent the debate in order to enable a diplomatic settlement with Egypt to be reached. (See Nos. 315 and 331.) On 16 August the debate resumed. The United States, Britain and France submitted a draft resolution calling upon Egypt to rescind its restrictions on the passage of ships and goods through the Canal. At this session the U.S. representative stated that the restrictions were not in keeping with the spirit of the armistice and had a prejudicial influence on the interests of various maritime nations, including the United States. Repeated attempts by Turkey and subsequently also by the Soviet Union to postpone the debate and prevent the adoption of an anti-Egyptian resolution were of no avail. (See No. 340, n. 1, and Nos. 341, 350, 355 and 358.) On 1 September the Council adopted the resolution. (See Editorial Note, p. 257. See *SCOR, 549th–558th Meetings,* 26 July, 1, 16, 27, and 29 August 1951.)

293. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 27 July 1951

Note

1. For a detailed report, see Elath's letter to Comay, 18 August 1951, 130.13/2582/5.

294. Y. Shimoni (Tel Aviv) to S. Divon. 27 July 1951

Copy: 130.02/2415/31

Shimoni answers Divon's question as to how and to what extent Israel's relations and ties with the Asian countries are likely to influence its policy towards the Arab world: (1) The importance of ties with Asia as a tool in Israel's Arab policy is likely to manifest itself in four ways: (a) The very fact that Israel had close ties with Asian countries would disprove the Arab claim that Israel is imperialistic, dispossesses Asian peoples, etc. (b) By fostering ties with Asia, Israel would foil the Arab design to cut Israel off from the east completely. The existence of ties with Asia would persuade the Arabs that it is time to make peace and come to terms with Israel's existence. Establishing ties with Muslim countries in Asia would be doubly advantageous. (c) Economic ties with Asian countries would boost their interest in Israel's problems with the Arab countries, such as the Suez Canal problem. (d) These countries might be interested in mediating between Israel and the Arabs. (2) Shimoni stresses that there are no ties with Asian countries at present, and that if Israel wishes to establish such ties, it must set up legations in these countries. He proposes one legation in India, one in Southeast Asia, and a third in China. He also proposes that consideration be given to establishing a representation in Japan and to developing Israel's economic and trade ties with it. (3) Shimoni refers to the question of the attitude of Muslim Asian countries towards Israel. He sees no opening for an Israeli political offensive to modify the hostility of countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, except perhaps through British or American pressure. As for Indonesia, Shimoni points out that this country has given no indication thus far that it rules out ties with Israel, but there is the danger that Indonesia's attitude towards Israel may deteriorate due to the ascendancy of the fanatical Muslim elements there. He proposes that efforts be made in this direction, too.

295. G. Rafael to M. Sharett (Telegram). 27 July 1951

Note

1. The Knesset elections on 30 July.

296. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 28 July 1951

Notes

1. No. 295.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
3. See No. 216 and nn. 1–4 *ibid.*
4. Sharett did not accept Eban's analysis of the situation and argued that the clash with Riley was inevitable as long as he continued to advance the following positions: presenting himself as "overlord" of the demilitarized zone; demanding that Israel agree to a settlement with the Syrians based on conceding part of the demilitarized zone; freezing the situation by halting all work in the Hula. Sharett said that by the time Eban's telegram arrived the construction of the dam had already been completed, and the only remaining problem was putting it into service. In another telegram Sharett agreed to Eban's proposals. (See Sharett's telegrams to Eban, Y897, 1 August 1951; Y901, 2 August 1951, 130.09/2330/2.)

297. M. Sharett to A. Eban and E. Elath (Telegram). 29 July 1951

Notes

1. See No. 289.
2. See Elath's reply in No. 300.

298. W. E. Riley to M. Sharett. 31 July 1951

Notes

1. No. 261.
2. Editorial Note, p. 140.
3. See No. 256, n. 4.
4. See No. 159 and No. 163, n. 3.
5. See Editorial Note, p. 119.

299. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 1 August 1951

Note

1. See Editorial Note, p. 217.

300. E. Elath to M. Sharett (Telegram). 1 August 1951

Notes

1. No. 297.
2. In another telegram, Elath reported that during the conversation Strang had expressed satisfaction with the results of the elections in Israel, which meant a continuation of the present line in Israel's foreign policy. He said that the Foreign Office was awaiting the reply of the Israeli Prime Minister on the matters raised in his conversation with Robertson, and added that the response would be of great assistance in the discussions that were taking place in Britain concerning the defence of the Middle East. (See Elath to Comay, LI707, 1 August 1951, 130.09/2319/1, as well as the detailed report on the conversation in Elath's letter to Comay, 7 August 1951, 130.13/2582/5. Cf. also Strang's report in PRO FO371/91716.)

301. Meeting: E. Herlitz–J. Waldo (Washington, 31 July 1951, document dated 1 August 1951)

Report: 93.08/337/21

The talk was held at the initiative of Waldo, who asked for an exchange of views on the situation. The political officer of the U.S. Embassy in Damascus, whose term of duty had just come to an end, also took part. (1) Jordan: Waldo said that Israel's apprehensions about the future and territorial integrity of Jordan were exaggerated. America believed there was no chance of the Mufti's gaining control of the western part of Jordan, because the Arab Legion would oppose this by force. He also said that the prospects of an Iraqi-Jordanian merger were nil, since neither the Jordanians nor the British were interested in such a unification. Even a merger of Jordan with Syria and Lebanon, which seemed more logical, was not feasible for the same reason. Waldo assumed that in the near future Talal's health would improve sufficiently for him to return to Jordan and cede the throne to his son Hussein. In such a case, Na'if would be appointed regent until Hussein came of age. Herlitz replied that if developments matched Waldo's expectations, Israel would have no cause for concern. (2) The Hula Valley: Herlitz took the offensive, presenting

Israel's complaints that even those articles of the 18 May resolution whose implementation was not subject to doubt had not been carried out. She pointed out that the Mixed Armistice Commission had not dealt with the twenty grievances lodged by Israel because it had not convened since 20 June; the question of the Arab lands had not been resolved, and the Arabs were in al-Hamma. Waldo replied that as long as Israel had not complied with all of Riley's instructions and was not "behaving", Riley could do nothing. The Foreign Ministry's intentions were good, but the I.D.F.'s execution was not sound. Riley claims that he can solve the demilitarized zone problems only as a whole, as opposed to dealing with al-Hamma separately. At this stage the political officer from Damascus intervened, saying that the American military attachés in Damascus had visited the zone and believed it impossible to prove that the Syrians had taken up positions in al-Hamma or Nuqaib, although it was true that they had established positions dominating the zone's approaches and were not allowing anyone access. Herlitz went on to say that the Syrians did not seem eager to have a meeting with the Israelis; after all, they had not yet reacted to Israel's draft agenda.[2] (3) Suez: Herlitz tried to ascertain whether the American representative would speak at the Security Council session, and whether there was any foundation to press reports that the Egyptians were prepared to retract their grievances against Britain in return for a sympathetic U.S. attitude on the Suez question. Waldo denied these rumours. At this stage, he said, the U.S. ambassador would not speak in the Security Council, since the U.S. wished to preserve an unbiased stance towards Egypt while Caffery was trying to settle the matter outside the Security Council. Herlitz contended that for Caffery to succeed, the Egyptians would have to come under strong pressure, including a speech by the U.S. delegate in the Security Council. Waldo disagreed with Herlitz's argument.

Notes

1. Anastas Hananiah, Jordanian Minister of Reconstruction and Agriculture before and after the assassination of King Abdallah. At one time or another during 1951 he held the portfolios of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Commerce, and Posts and Telegraph.
2. See No. 286.
3. See No. 290.
4. See No. 284.
5. David Wainhouse, director of the Office of U.N. Political and Security Affairs at the State Department; adviser to the U.S. delegation to the Sixth Session of the U.N. General Assembly.

302. M. Hanegbi to G. Jadid. 2 August 1951

Notes

1. This letter was sent to the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission and was transmitted on 3 August, through Colonel Taxis, to the Syrian representative on the commission (see Eytan to Sharett, 6 August 1951, 130/02/2433/9).
2. See No. 229.
3. Compare agenda with No. 286.
4. For the Syrians' reply, see No. 316.

303. A. Eban to E. Gross. 2 August 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 217.
2. Mahmud Fawzi, Egyptian Permanent Representative at the U.N.
3. See No. 299.

304. Memorandum by M. Comay (Tel Aviv). 2 August 1951

130.15/2570/7

Comay offers his comments on the Western factor in the Arab world, as the Arab policy consultation draws near. He writes that Israel's approach to the national aspirations of the Arab peoples is sympathetic in principle, but adds that under the existing circumstances Israel has no choice but to cooperate with the Western powers despite the enmity felt towards them in the region. The circumstances are: (1) Israel's dependence on Western aid, American in particular. (2) Because Israel has no relations with the Arabs, it cannot choose between friendship with them and with the West. (3) Israel's concern with regional defence obliges it to think in terms of some measure of cooperation with the defence programs of the West, and to propose to the Western powers that they help develop the Israeli economy for defence reasons.

Comay proposes guidelines leading towards an intermediate path in relations with the West, without automatically deferring to it. (1) In disputes between the Powers and an Arab country, cooperation with the West is desirable when Israel's interests coincide with those of the West. Examples include the Suez Canal, the Haifa refineries, and the

Gulf of Aqaba. (2) In a dispute in which Israel has no direct interest, it must maintain neutrality and exploit the dispute to its advantage. Examples are Iran and the British-Egyptian dispute concerning the stationing of British forces along the Canal. (3) In a dispute in which the West's stance is detrimental to Israel, Israel must oppose it with all the means at its disposal. Examples are the arming of certain Arab countries by the British, the State Department's tendency to reduce American aid in order to appease the Arabs, and France's feelers towards Syria at Israel's expense. (4) Israel ought to take advantage of differences of opinion between the Western powers on the Middle East. For example, Britain's policy on Jerusalem and the refugees is closer to Israel's than is that of the United States. On the northern border question, it is possible to bring about a disagreement between Britain and France. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that differences of opinion between Washington and London on Middle East defence are narrowing; Israel cannot rely excessively on such conflicts of interests, as was evident in the case of Iran. (5) Israel's anti-Arab information campaign in the West should not emulate the Arabs, who adopt an extreme, intransigent attitude. Comay suggests that Israel express a sympathetic attitude towards the Arab people, a desire to cooperate in resolving mutual problems, and support for any constructive Western initiative to improve the Arabs' lot. At the same time, Israel should also take every opportunity to stress the weakness, instability, xenophobia, corruption, etc. of the Arab countries. (6) The Arab countries' fragile internal situation is a complex issue. If Israel supports the opposition elements in these countries, it is liable to clash with the Western powers' intention to maintain the *status quo* and allay tension and unrest in the region, which threaten their positions there and play into Russian hands. If Israel decides to intervene actively along the aforementioned lines, it must be careful to avoid giving the impression that it is an agent of instability and ferment in the area. (7) As for the problem of comprehensive peace with the Arab countries versus separate agreements on specific issues, Comay recommends that Israel re-adopt the principle of a comprehensive agreement, except for issues directly related to the Armistice Agreements.

305. E. Yoran[1] (Bled) to the East European Division. 2 August 1951

Orig.: 130.11/2494/6

Yoran reports on his talk with Kardelj,[2] in which he raised the question of the Security Council debate on Suez.[3] He presented the prob-

lem in both its aspects: international law concerning the principle of free navigation, and the Armistice Agreement as a vehicle of peace and not as a means for the resumption of hostilities. Kardelj answered that Yugoslavia supported Israel's stance, particularly with respect to the second line of reasoning. Yugoslavia was less interested in the legal aspect of the problem. Kardelj said that Yugoslavia's ambassador to the U.N. had been instructed to support Israel. Yoran mentioned Israel's apprehension that the Egyptians might try to postpone the debate and gain time by negotiations. Kardelj replied that Yugoslavia's representative in the Security Council would oppose negotiations meant to postpone a solution. He clarified that Yugoslavia could not disregard its relations with the Arabs, but added that it supported Israel on the Suez issue.

Yoran raised the problem of the Israel-Yugoslavia trade agreement, and Kardelj promised to intervene in the matter. Kardelj also evinced an interest in Israel's economic situation in view of large-scale immigration, in the country's industrial development, raw materials and natural resources, and its diverse forms of agricultural settlement. Yoran described Israel's settlement patterns, and Kardelj remarked that something could be learnt from Israel on settlement and cooperative enterprises.

Yoran adds that the meeting received prominent coverage in the Yugoslav press.

Notes

1. Ezra Yoran, Israel Minister to Yugoslavia.
2. Edvard Kardelj, Yugoslav Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 217.

306. A. Eban to the United States Division (Telegram). 3 August 1951

Notes

1. In a telegram of 30 July, Eban was asked about the prospects for holding a conference of Jewish organizations on the subject of reparations, and whether Goldmann and Blaustein had agreed between them when and where to hold it (93.01/2203/12).
2. Rose Halperin, member of the Jewish Agency Executive in the United States and president of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America.

307. E. Elath to M. Comay (Telegram). 3 August 1951

Notes

1. Tawfiq Abu al-Huda, Jordanian Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 25 July 1951, a few days after Abdallah's assassination.
2. Sir Alec Kirkbride, British minister to Jordan.
3. See No. 300.
4. Richard Rapier Stokes, Lord Privy Seal and Minister of Materials in the British Cabinet.
5. See No. 290. See also detailed report in Elath's letter to Comay, 7 August 1951, 130.13/2582/5.

308. A. Eban to W. E. Riley. 4 August 1951

Notes

1. See report on the interview in Eban's telegram to Sharett, W282, 4 August 1951, 93.01/2207/20.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
3. See No. 261.
4. See No. 159.
5. See No. 295.
6. See No. 250.
7. See Riley's answer in No. 313.

309. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 6 August 1951

Notes

1. See No. 271 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. Edwin M. Wright, Special Assistant to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs in the Department of State. Wright attacked Israel in a lecture he delivered at Indiana University. His speech was published in the press and sparked off a wave of protest by American Jews. (See Eban's telegram to the United States Division, W283, 6 August 1951, 130.09/2309/2.)
3. See No. 308.
4. Cf. report on conversation in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 820–23.

310. A. Eban (Washington) to M. Sharett. 7 August 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2443/9

In view of discussions at the Foreign Ministry on the Jerusalem question,[1] and after consultation with Embassy staff and Israel's representatives at the U.N., Eban summarizes his recommendations on the Jerusalem question: (a) It is not clear whether the question of Jerusalem will be raised in the General Assembly. There are indications both ways. It is not on the Assembly's provisional agenda. The Church is as apprehensive today of a renewed debate on Jerusalem as it was in the 1950 Assembly, since any discussion is likely to detract from its achievements in the 1949 Assembly resolution. The Church is waging a propaganda campaign meant to preclude any alternative to the internationalization plan, and it is possible that the matter will not come up at all. (b) At the same time, the Vatican might well decide to raise the question of internationalization in the Assembly in order to eliminate all other proposals for Jerusalem. Even the Arab countries are capable of bringing it up irrespective of the prospects of its success, merely in order to harass Israel in the international arena. (c) Israel has to prepare for both eventualities. On the one hand, it must do nothing to endanger the possibility that the issue will not be raised in the Assembly. On the other hand, it must be ready for battle if the situation suddenly changes. (d) In Foreign Ministry discussions, two tendencies emerged. The first assumes that the issue will not be brought up for resolution, and that the best policy is therefore a passive one, meant to further the attainment of this prospect. The second assumes that Israel will face a struggle in the Assembly and must prepare itself to ensure a successful defence of its position. Neither line of thinking claims that Israel ought to take the initiative, as it did in the 1950 Assembly. (e) In a chance talk with Eban on the Jerusalem problem, Waldo hinted that it was necessary to reconstitute the militant front that had prevented approval of the internationalization plan in the last Assembly. In other words, a debate was inevitable, and it was essential to ensure that its point of departure be the amended Swedish proposal that Israel and Jordan supported[2] in the last Assembly. Waldo believes that this tactic will surely solve the Jerusalem problem once and for all. There are two possibilities. Either the Swedish plan is adopted and the Jerusalem problem is solved, or it is defeated, in which case most countries will consider the Jerusalem problem as eliminated. Either way, it would be possible to set about establishing the American Embassy in Jerusalem. Waldo disclosed that U.S. representatives in Israel had already thoroughly investigated the possibilities

of accommodating the Embassy in Jerusalem. Waldo emphasized that the strategy of favouring the Swedish plan would succeed only if Israel and Jordan collaborated on the basis of this plan. (f) Eban proposes the following course of action: (1) Since it is possible that the issue will not be raised, Israel has no interest in encouraging or expediting its presentation. (2) Because some Arab or Catholic country might demand that the Jerusalem issue be deliberated, Israel should prepare itself for this contingency. (3) If such a demand is presented, Israel must ensure that the point of departure for such a debate is a plan amenable to Israel. Otherwise, the 1949 internationalization proposal would come up for discussion once again. (4) Israel must immediately enter into discussions with representatives of the countries that presented the amended Swedish proposal, i.e., the United States, Great Britain, Sweden, and Uruguay. The aim of these talks should be a two-fold agreement. First, Israel must ensure the presentation of a detailed proposal endorsed by itself and the possibility of being supported by Jordan; second, Israel must reach an agreement with these countries whereby the plan will be presented only after it is known that some country insists that the matter be placed on the agenda and there is no way of consigning the problem to oblivion.

Notes

1. See, for example, No. 227 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See Vol. 5, Editorial Note, p. 698.

311. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 7 August 1951

Notes

1. See Acheson's letter to Palmer, 27 July 1951, and Palmer's telegram to Acheson, 3 August 1951, in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 799–801 and 816–17.
2. Similar information concerning the intention to reactivate the Conciliation Commission had also been received from Geneva (Kahany to Eytan, GN86, 8 August 1951, 130.09/2302/8).

312. G. Rafael to W. Eytan (Telegram). 7 August 1951

Notes

1. On the Suez question, see Editorial Note, p. 217.
2. See No. 311 and n. 1 *ibid.*

313. W. E. Riley to A. Eban. 8 August 1951

Notes

1. No. 308.
2. See No. 244, n. 2.
3. See Bossavy to Sharett, 7 August 1951, 130.02/2433/9.
4. See No. 159.

314. M. Keren to the United States Division (Telegram). 8 August 1951

Note

1. In another telegram, Keren stated that the amendment to the bill had been submitted by Congressman Walter Judd (Republican, Minnesota), and had been passed by a vote of 16 to 5. The atmosphere in the conference committee was extremely sympathetic and encouraging. Two proposed amendments—one, by Congressman Jacob Javits, to appropriate $150 million to Israel only, and the second, by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., to appropriate an additional $125 million for the entire region—had been rejected by a large majority. Keren added that the increased allocation for Israel was a signal achievement that had come about thanks to the indefatigable efforts of Israel's friends. At the same time, he cautioned that the decisive battle was still to be fought (Keren to U.S. Division, V303, 9 August 1951, 93.01/2207/20).

315. A. Lourie to W. Eytan (Telegram). 8 August 1951

Notes

1. The reference is to the election of the Turkish delegate to the Security Council. See Vol. 5, Nos. 371 and 377.
2. At that time, Arazi met Muharrem Nuri Birgi, an official in the Turkish Foreign Ministry, and other members of the Turkish ruling echelons. From these meetings he learned that Sarper had been instructed to vote for a compromise with Egypt and, in the case of a condemnation of Egypt, to ask for a delay to hold consultations. Arazi had the impression that Turkish business circles were pressing the Foreign Ministry to guarantee the opening of the Canal at any price, whereas the Foreign Ministry was afraid of becoming entangled with Egypt at a time when the Middle East defence plan was on the agenda. (See Eytan's telegram to Israel representatives abroad, MTA48, 10 August 1951, 130.09/2377/1.)
3. Adnan Kural, an official in the Turkish Foreign Ministry; member of the Turkish delegation to the Sixth Session of the U.N. General Assembly.

316. S. N. Sabbagh to M. Hanegbi. 9 August 1951

Notes

1. Major Sa'id Nabi Sabbagh, senior Syrian delegate on the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission.
2. No. 302.

317. E. Elath to M. Comay. 9 August 1951

Notes

1. 130.09/2319/1.
2. See No. 300.
3. Cf. Morrison's report in his message to Chadwick of 7 August 1951, in PRO FO371/91716.
4. Alice M. Bacon, Labour member of the British Parliament.
5. Ralph Claremont S. Stevenson, British Ambassador to Egypt.

318. A. Kubovy (Warsaw) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 9 August 1951

Coded Tel. BI351; Inc.: 130.09/2306/4

Kubovy reports on an extremely cordial 40-minute conversation with the Polish Prime Minister. Kubovy complained that Polish Jews were afraid to contact legation personnel. The Prime Minister did not directly refer to the matter but admitted that a unique relationship existed between Israel and local Jews, even after the latter decided to remain in Poland. Concerning emigration to Israel, he repeated the familiar argument that people could not be allowed to change their citizenship every six months. He promised that the government would again look into the matter of the emigration to Israel of relatives and orphans.

Kubovy also reports having visited the Soviet ambassador to Poland. The conversation concerned Suez. Kubovy told the ambassador that the Egyptian masses were liable to view Soviet support of Egypt as Communist support of the feudal regime, while a political failure in Egypt after the military one would encourage the progressive forces in Egypt. Kubovy believes the ambassador was impressed by this argument.

319. G. C. McGhee to A. Eban. 10 August 1951

Notes

1. See No. 271.
2. See No. 225.
3. The list has been omitted here.

320. M. Sharett to the Israel Missions in Washington, Paris, and London (Telegram). 10 August 1951

Notes

1. The Twenty-third Zionist Congress, which convened in Jerusalem on 14 August.
2. Cf. *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 819–20, 823.

321. E. E. Palmer to M. Sharett. 10 August 1951

Notes

1. The present document was transmitted to Sharett as a telegram. The text given here is taken from Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 337, 15 August 1951, 93.03/3055/14.
2. See Sharett's answers in Nos. 324 and 375.

322. E. Najar (Paris) to W. Eytan. 12 August 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Najar summarizes the highlights of several meetings with members of the Conciliation Commission: Sasson with Aras, Shiloah with Barco, and all three with De Boisanger. (a) The initiative for the Paris conference had come from the Americans. (b) The conference is meant to be a last-ditch attempt to use the Conciliation Commission to break the deadlock in Israel-Arab relations and to point to the deteriorating status of the Armistice agreements. The conference's sponsors view the current situation as an impediment to Middle East defence. If the attempt fails, they will disband the Conciliation Commission at the next General Assembly and try other ways. (c) The agenda has not been finalized, and the State Department is still working on it. To prevent the possibility of countries' setting conditions for their participation in the conference, the invitation[1] omits reference to the agenda.

(d) The Conciliation Commission wants to turn itself into a mediator which would present practical proposals and also press the parties to meet directly, based on separate agendas for Israel with each of the Arab countries. (e) The conference's work will last for three to four months, and Israel will have to prepare for wide-ranging and comprehensive deliberations in the General Assembly. (f) Under these circumstances, it is feared that the Hula and Suez issues will be raised. (g) In these talks Israel's representatives argued that there was no reason to pin hopes on the results of the conference if the Powers continued competing with each other in appeasing the Arabs. They emphasized in particular that the absence of a decision on Suez in the Security Council would undermine the prospects of a successful conference and might even cause Israel to refrain from participating. De Boisanger and Barco found the Israeli argumentation very impressive, asked whether Israel would present it to the State Department, and recommended that Israel do so at once.

Note

1. See No. 321.

323. Y. Yadin [Tel Aviv] to D. Ben-Gurion. 13 August 1951

Orig.: IMDEA 230.72/1502

Yadin describes developments in Foreign Ministry relations with the Armistice Commissions, in relation to the Hula dispute. (1) He asserts that relations between the I.D.F. and the Foreign Ministry with respect to the operation of the Mixed Armistice Commissions have become intolerable. (2) Yadin does not deny that the Foreign Ministry is empowered—if the Prime Minister so decides—to set the rules governing contacts with Arab countries, but Foreign Ministry instructions to the Army units that are to execute them must be channelled through the General Staff only. This is the General Staff's standard procedure with the Defence Ministry, too. (3) Yadin accuses the Foreign Ministry of withholding from the General Staff all information on contacts with General Riley concerning the Hula affair. (4) Sharett had visited the Hula over the General Staff's protests, thereby calling attention to the problem once again. He had convened a meeting in the Hula Valley of all parties involved without informing the General Staff, established ground rules, and decided which problems were to be brought before the Armistice Commission. Matters came to such a

pass that army representatives in the Armistice Commission appealed to the Deputy Chief of General Staff, who had to admit that he was in the dark and told Yadin he was unwilling to be responsible to him for coordinating Armistice Commission activities. (5) Furthermore, the General Staff had been informed that Reuven Dafni[2] would participate in Armistice Commission meetings and would bring Foreign Ministry instructions to these meetings. Yadin opposes this procedure. (6) Horwitz and Berechyahu[3] were receiving instructions directly from the Foreign Ministry and continued to maintain direct contact with Taxis. This had already caused very serious damage because they lacked expertise on security issues. (7) Yadin makes it clear that the army is in charge of Armistice Commission affairs, and is responsible for dealing with all security problems in the demilitarized zone, procuring and safeguarding heavy equipment, and coordinating the activities of all agencies in the area. (8) In the situation that has arisen, Yadin asks Ben-Gurion to relieve the army of its responsibility for dealing with and coordinating the work of the Armistice Commissions in the north, and to relieve the General Staff of the responsibility for coordinating the activities of all agencies involved in the Hula drainage project.

Notes

1. One sentence has been omitted here.
2. Reuven Dafni, from August to November the official in charge of Armistice Commission affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. See also No. 378.
3. Elhanan Berechyahu, head of the Technical Department of the Jewish National Fund and member of the Board of Directors and Executive of Mekorot Water Company.

324. M. Sharett to E. E. Palmer. 13 August 1951

Notes

1. See No. 321 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See Israel's final answer in No. 375.

325. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 13 August 1951

Notes

1. See No. 45, n. 2. See also the survey entitled "The United States and the Palestine Conflict", 17 August 1951, 130.20/2479/9.

2. See No. 324.
3. Eban wired his suggestion that the response to the Conciliation Commission contain the following points: (1) A reminder of Israel's willingness to discuss the outstanding issues between it and the Arabs. (2) An explanation of the futility of conducting an effective debate when one party refuses to meet the other. (3) Clarification that Israel would send representatives to Paris in the hope that the Conciliation Commission would succeed in arranging a meeting between them and the Arabs. (4) An emphasis that peace can be achieved only through an agreement and that the only way is by means of direct talks under the aegis of the Commission. (5) Basing Israel's position on the armistice agreements, which constitute a transitional phase on the road to peace, and making it clear that Israel was ready to extend them only if a final accord were in view (Eban's telegram to Sharett, WNT13, 15 August 1951, 93.01/2207/20).
4. See Vol. 4, Nos. 281 and 372.
5. Information to Israel Missions Abroad, 31 October 1949, No. 35, 130.02/2447/1.
6. See Sharett to Eban, 13 August 1951, 130.09/2330/2.

326. Secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legation in Belgrade. 13 August 1951

Coded Tel. MTA54; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Sharett summoned the Yugoslav envoy in order to explain the bearing [in principle] of the Suez affair upon prospects for Middle East peace and the Security Council's status. Appeasing Egypt would only encourage the extremists and would not expedite a solution. Sharett opposed Bebler's[1] proposed amendments and expressed Israel's regret over the Yugoslav initiative. He noted the special role of Yugoslavia, a country known for its courage and moral political conscience, and stressed that vacillation on the part of Yugoslavia, with its Moslem minority, would intensify that of Turkey, which was entirely Moslem. He cited World War II as proof of the failure of submission and appeasement. The envoy answered that his country was interested in removing the residues of war in Palestine and in ending the Suez blockade. He was not aware of the reasoning that lay behind his government's instructions to the U.N. delegation. He promised to cable the contents of his conversation with Sharett to his government immediately.

Note

1. Bebler proposed several amendments to the British draft resolution on the Suez Canal blockade before the Security Council. The amendments toned down and

modified the text of the introductory paragraphs, but the main change was in the last section. Bebler proposed replacing "the Security Council *calls upon* Egypt to cease the blockade in the Suez Canal" with "the Security Council *requests* that Egypt," etc. In a meeting with Bebler, Eban strenuously objected to the proposed changes and pointed out to him how many times the phrase "calls upon" appears in the Security Council's resolution of 18 May (see Editorial Note, p. 140). Following the meeting, Eban advised Sharett to apply pressure on Yugoslavia via the legations in Tel Aviv and Belgrade. (See text of Yugoslav amendment in the appendix of Bebler's letter to Eban, 9 August 1951, 93.08/339/2; see also Eban's telegram to Sharett, X268, 9 August 1951, 130.09/2330/6.)

327. S. Divon (Paris) to W. Eytan. 14 August 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2410/1

Divon reports on talks with Muhammad Sarraj al-Din[1] at Vichy on 4 August 1951. Sarraj al-Din is Inspector-General of the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior and directly responsible for the police and security services in his country. Sarraj al-Din is a composed, serious person with influence on members of his extensive family. Fuad Sarraj al-Din[1] takes account of his advice and considerations in foreign policy. Divon summarizes the round-the-clock session of talks as follows: (1) The conversations taught Shiloah how truly ignorant government circles and the Egyptian public are about anything pertaining to Israel. Muhammad Sarraj al-Din claimed that Israel was partially responsible for this because it did not mount a planned information effort. (2) Muhammad Sarraj al-Din alleged that Egypt has no planned or consistent policy on Israel. The official policy, articulated and executed by the Foreign Minister with the support of Azzam and, in many cases, the Egyptian royal court, does not represent the views of a majority of government ministers or members of the Wafd party. Relations within the Wafd, and the special circumstances arising from Nahhas'[2] unwillingness to take an initiative on relations between the parties and the royal court, permitted the Foreign Minister to adopt his present policy. Moderates in the government, however, were considering seizing the right opportunity to depose the Foreign Minister and change the course of Egyptian foreign policy. Egypt's policy on Israel will be considerably affected by the outcome of the contest between Sarraj al-Din's faction and the extremist group which gained its support from much of the Wafd youth and a group of Wafd members of parliament. The dispute between the two factions also touches upon whether it is necessary and worthwhile for Egypt to intervene in Arab affairs. One faction (that of Fuad Sarraj al-Din) argues that Egypt's future is not connected with integration into or action in the

Arab arena, while the "Arabist school" claims that Egypt must take an active part in Arab policy and exploit its status in the Arab world in its relations with Western countries. (3) Divon's interlocutor told him that the Egyptian government and the Wafd do not support the Mufti. He may have some support from Arab League circles, the royal court, and perhaps even the Foreign Minister. (4) The main obstacles to an Israel-Egyptian settlement were distrust of Israel, fear of its intentions, and the sense of its being alien to the region. Arab leaders exploit all of these to incite opposition to Israel and widen the schism. The main factor straining the relations is the refugee problem.

Summing up the conversation, Divon and Muhammad Sarraj al-Din reached the following conclusions: (a) Coordinated action must be taken to reduce tension and clear the atmosphere between Egypt and Israel as a prerequisite for any progress towards a settlement. (b) Regular contact must be established for the mutual exchange of explanations, opinions, and, where necessary, proposals. (c) Muhammad Sarraj al-Din will explore the possibility of consultations and exchanges of views between representatives of both sides wherever issues of great importance to both sides are involved. (d) Upon his return to Egypt, Muhammad Sarraj al-Din will converse with a number of leading personalities and explore possible ways of implementing the above points. He may propose a second meeting, in a few months, in order to examine the possibilities of *rapprochement*.

Sarraj al-Din and Divon agreed to meet again in France. Divon promised to submit a memorandum on their talks.

Notes

1. Fuad Sarraj al-Din, Egyptian Minister of the Interior and of Finance; Secretary-General of the Wafd Party.
2. Mustafa Nahhas, Prime Minister of Egypt and leader of the Wafd Party.

328. S. Divon (Paris) to W. Eytan. 14 August 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2410/1

Divon reports on a conversation with Yassin Sarraj al-Din, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Egyptian parliament and brother of Fuad Sarraj al-Din, on 8 August 1951 in Paris. The talk was frank and cordial. Yassin Sarraj al-Din agreed with Shiloah that Egyptian foreign policy considerations often fail to assess correctly Israel's position and interests. Yassin Sarraj al-Din's comments on the work of the

parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and its deliberations on Palestine affairs indicate a surprising unfamiliarity with Israel-Arab affairs. Yassin Sarraj al-Din agreed that due to a lack of channels of contact there was no way of engaging in dialogue on matters that might be of mutual interest to the two countries, and this could only be to their detriment. Sarraj Al-Din said that despite the extremism sweeping the Arab world, including the Egyptian parliament and its Foreign Affairs Committee, there was considerable room for preparatory measures and also step-by-step action that would yield results in the future. He, too, added that because of an anomalous situation in Egypt, foreign policy was being conducted by a faction that did not represent the large majority of party members. He believes the exchange of political information to be a very good idea; had he known the facts that Shiloah had now imparted to him, he could have put that information to good use in the Foreign Affairs Committee. As the owner of Wafd newspapers and a co-owner of journals and weeklies, he stressed the important role the press could play in setting the stage.

Note

1. The end of the paragraph has been omitted.

329. S. Divon [Paris] to W. Eytan. 14 August 1951

Copy: 130.02/2453/12

Divon reports on talks with Ahmad Abbud Pasha, one of Egypt's leading economists and financiers and an influential figure in government circles. In their first conversation, on 8 August, Abbud Pasha agreed that an attempt must be made to bridge the ever-widening abyss between Israel and the Arab countries. He said that despite extremist and anti-Israeli tendencies in Egypt, it was worth trying to clear the atmosphere and establish contact in order to clarify the problems and exchange opinions. In the second talk, on 9 August, Ahmad Abbud Pasha said that he had managed to converse with Fuad Sarraj al-Din, who was favourably inclined towards the idea, and had asked Abbud Pasha to meet Divon a second time. At the end of the two-hour talk, Abbud Pasha said he would speak again, in greater depth, with Fuad Sarraj al-Din and other people, perhaps even flying to Egypt for this purpose. After soliciting their responses and ascertaining the position of Nahhas Pasha, he would inform Divon of any

possibility of implementing a minimum plan to clear the atmosphere and establish contact.

330. M. Keren (Washington) to F. E. Shinnar. 14 August 1951

Copy: 93.08/344/15

Keren reacts to the results of the discussion on reparations in the Foreign Ministry on 26 July.[1] He had already expressed his reservations about the decisions in a previous telegram to Sharett,[2] but now wishes to elaborate upon them. Keren understands that it was decided in the consultation not to bring the issue of direct negotiations with Germany for resolution by the government, but rather to approach the three powers again and ask them to recognize in principle the justice of Israel's claim. Only after a reply was received from the powers would the issue be raised in the government. Keren argues that this means postponing action on the reparations issue for at least half a year. He is not sure that the powers will acquiesce to Israel's request positively and unreservedly, and even if they do, it is hard to envision the practical result of such a reply. Keren assumes that the western powers' reply would be evasive if not negative, and as such it would represent a serious stumbling-block to Israel's action on this issue. Keren sees no alternative but to resolve in favour of direct negotiations with Germany at the earliest opportunity, since time is working against Israel.

Notes

1. Report in File 93.08/344/15.
2. A marginal note marked here in the original states: "which the Ambassador and Rosenne signed". The telegram has not been traced.

331. T. Arazi[1] (İstanbul) to W. Eytan. 15 August 1951

Copy: 130.02/2382/2

Arazi reports on a talk with the Turkish envoy in Israel who was on home leave. Arazi expounded on the economic and military advantage that would accrue to Turkey by removing the Suez Canal blockade. He recounted the contents of his conversation with Birgi[2] and Sasson's with Köprülü.[3] He said Turkey had not adopted a neutral

position, either in the Hula dispute or the Suez Canal blockade. He claimed that Turkey was foiling the Anglo-American-French proposal in the Security Council. Arazi explained that if Egypt were to emerge from the Security Council debate with neither a resolution against it nor a commitment to reopen the Canal, this would be perceived as a triumph by Egyptian public opinion, and would only lead to a more stubborn stance. In such a case, Turkey would suffer from a further delay in the possibility of obtaining oil supplies from the Haifa refineries.

The envoy supported his government's position and attempted to justify it. He explained that at that stage of the regional defence agreement talks they did not wish to push the Arabs into the Russians' arms. Arazi replied that the Arabs would not react with anything stronger than mere talk about the "Third Bloc", and that in any case it was inconceivable that the Arabs would join the Eastern Bloc. The envoy explained that Turkey's objective was to prevent an eruption of hostilities in the Middle East until the Mediterranean defence alliance had been set up. Once the alliance was established, they hoped, the problem would solve itself. Arazi replied that Israel did not believe this was the way to prevent the outbreak of hostilities; on the contrary, it might even accelerate them. The envoy believed it easier for Britain to influence its Iraqi ally to open the oil pipeline than to influence Egypt to remove the restrictions. If the British paid the Iraqis more, the oil would start flowing and the Suez problem, too, would be solved.

Arazi added that the talk had taken place in a cordial atmosphere. He hoped that in its wake the Turkish envoy would try to influence his Foreign Ministry in the desired direction, even though he had said that he would not have time to meet the minister and Birgi.

Notes

1. Tuvia Arazi, Press and Commercial Counselor at the Israel Consulate in Istanbul. During Sasson's absence in Paris he served as chargé d'affaires in the Israel Legation in Ankara.
2. See No. 315, n. 2.
3. See report on meeting in Arazi's letter to Eytan, 14 August 1951, 130.02/2382/2.

332. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 15 August 1951

Note

1. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Jr. (Democrat), member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives.

333. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to E. Herlitz (Washington). 15 August 1951

Orig.: 93.08/344/15

Avner responds to Herlitz's report on the talk with the Deputy Director of the Bureau of German Affairs in the State Department on 20 July[1]: (1) Despite Lewis's answers, Avner believes Israel should continue to pursue diplomatic negotiations with the Americans on this subject. An attempt should be made to elicit from them a basic statement expressing general support of Israel's reparations claim, precisely because of the possibility of negotiations with the Germans. (2) Avner states that the government has already approved, in principle, direct negotiations with the Germans under the following conditions[3]: (a) a declaration by Germany condemning German crimes; (b) a general pledge that acts such as the extermination of the Jewish people would no longer be countenanced by the German people on German soil; (c) an assurance that the German government was prepared to remedy whatever could be rectified by expediting individual reparations and agreeing in principle to bear the burden of collective reparations to the Jewish people; (d) an invitation to Israel to enter direct negotiations on these issues. Avner is convinced that if the Germans issue such a declaration, the government of Israel will agree to negotiate directly with Germany. The information in Israel's possession suggests that Adenauer may make such a public declaration within the next few months. Therefore, Avner believes it desirable to give the Americans the impression that Israel is willing to negotiate with the Germans under the above conditions. Such a procedure may generate American pressure on the Germans to issue the declaration and further the entire reparations issue. (3) As to the German declaration, Avner cites reports alleging that a draft has already been presented through indirect channels to Goldmann, who amended and returned it. Avner suggests that swift action be taken in America to ensure in advance that the declaration is satisfactory. He recommends that Israel forward such information as it has to the Americans, and urge them to make efforts to provide Jewish organizations, and Israeli ones in particular, with advance knowledge of the text of the declaration, so that changes could be incorporated. The Americans must be persuaded that it would not be wise for the Germans to rush ahead without preparing a preliminary text and issue a declaration that does not fulfil Israel's demands. Such a declaration might be self-defeating, for Israel will not enter into negotiations if the declaration issued provokes a torrent of criticism in the Jewish world. Avner proposes that McCloy explain matters to the Germans. (4) Avner shares Horowitz's

view that an inquiry into Germany's economic situation would not serve Israeli interests. It would provoke endless complaints against Israel, and is best left undone. (5) Avner argues against the decision by Sharett and Goldmann to hold a world Jewish conference on 17 October. He believes such a conference is dangerous. He expects disputes about Israel's right to speak in the name of the Jewish people, and various political arguments that would make it difficult to present an agreed-upon statement at the end of the conference. He fears that the conference is doomed to failure. Avner asks Herlitz to clarify her position on this issue for him.

Notes

1. See No. 292.
2. Avner to Livneh, 9 and 12 August 1951. The letters have been omitted here.
3. It is not clear what Avner based his conclusion on (see n. 7 below). On 18 July, the government decided, by a vote of seven to one, not to discuss direct negotiations with Germany. The issue was passed on for a decision by the new government to be formed after the elections.
4. Harriman proposed that the Germans receive raw materials from the Americans, process them, and send the finished goods to Israel as reparations.
5. Livneh to Avner, 9 August 1951, 130.10/2543/6. The letter has been omitted here.
6. See No. 254.
7. In Herlitz's absence, Keren answered the letter. Keren was surprised by what Avner wrote concerning an agreement in principle by the Government to direct negotiations with the Germans and by his instructions for action. He complained of the lack of coordination among the various parties dealing with German issues and the lack of consistency in his instructions. With regard to the point at hand, Keren proposed reconsidering whether there was not a risk in attempting to influence Adenauer's anticipated statement, lest Israel thereby give its imprimatur to the statement. In his opinion, it was not desirable that an Israeli body or official representative be involved in the drafting of the statement; it was preferable to act informally. Keren disagreed with Avner's proposal to try to get the Western Powers to agree on a basic formula supporting Israel's right to reparations (7 September 1951, 130.10/2543/6). See Avner's reply, 21 September 1951, 93.08/334/22.

334. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 16 August 1951

Notes

1. During the Security Council debate. See Editorial Note, p. 217.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 160.
3. See No. 313.
4. See No. 308 and n. 1 *ibid.*
5. The original has (erroneously): parties; amended according to the incoming version.

335. W. Eytan to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations (Telegram). 16 August 1951

Notes

1. See two letters from Arazi to Eytan, 15 August 1951, 130.02/2328/2.
2. See Yoran to the East European Division, 15 August 1951, 93.08/339/2; Yoran's telegram to the Foreign Ministry, JU111, 15 August 1951, 130.09/2298/8.
3. See No. 337.

336. G. Rafael to M. Sharett (Telegram). 17 August 1951

Notes

1. See memorandum attached to Lourie's letter to Eytan, 21 August 1951, 93.03/3008/5.
2. Sharett sent a message to Riley concerning the commissioning of the dam on the Jordan River (see Sharett's telegram to Eban, MH4687, 16 August 1951, 130.02/2433/9).
3. See Editorial Note, p. 153, and No. 209.
4. See No. 334.

337. E. Yoran (Belgrade) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 18 August 1951

Coded Tel. JU113; Inc.: 130.09/2298/8

Yoran reports on a forty-minute meeting with Tito on 18 August. Tito emphasized Yugoslavia's friendship with Israel. He asked about *aliya* from Eastern Europe, assured Yoran of Yugoslavia's support on the Suez blockade issue, and promised to speak to his foreign minister about it. He asked Yoran to forward best wishes to the Prime Minister.[1]

Note

1. A full account of the conversation can be found in Report No. 12, Yoran to the East European Division, 19 August 1951, 130.11/2494/6.

338. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions Abroad (Telegram). 19 August 1951

Note

1. Cf. No. 340, n. 1, No. 341, and Editorial Note, p. 217.

339. A. Eban to C. F. Brannan. 20 August 1951

340. A. Lourie to W. Eytan (Telegram). 21 August 1951

Notes

1. The Security Council debate that was postponed at Turkey's request, from Tuesday, 21 August to Monday, 27 August. The Turks requested the postponement in order to make a final effort to persuade Egypt to lift the blockade of the Suez Canal.
2. The fourth Interim Report on the Implementation of the Security Council Resolution of 18 May 1951 on the Hula dispute, which Riley had submitted to the U.N. Secretary-General on 16 August 1951 (see Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 345, 26 August 1951, 93.03/3008/5).
3. On 9 August, Hassan al-Hakim set up a new government in Syria. The Syrian Parliament expressed its confidence in the government on 15 August.
4. Farid Zain al-Din, Syrian representative at the U.N.

341. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions Abroad. 22 August 1951

Coded Tel. MT59; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Eytan cables the missions the text of a directive sent to Arazi in Istanbul.[1] Members of the mission to the U.N. in New York tend to think that the latest postponement in the Security Council[2] was the death blow to a resolution on Suez. It seems as if the intention is to procrastinate on the issue and bring it up at the Conciliation Commission's Paris conference. Arazi was instructed to make every effort to prevent the postponement. Eytan believes that there is no point in meeting Köprülü again, but that it is worthwhile to meet Birgi. It is advisable to try to pressure Köprülü through the President and Prime Minister of Turkey. Eytan instructs Arazi to consult with the British Ambassador to Turkey about what more can be done. The Turks should be told that Israel is keeping very careful track of the Security Council's action on Suez in connection with the Paris conference. They should be informed that if, after the grave measures that the Security Council

took against Israel on 18 May, the Powers do not have the courage to take similar action against Egypt for an illegal action that has lasted two and a half years, Israel will be inclined to treat the Paris conference as predisposed against it. By dragging its feet on this issue, the Security Council is publicly undermining its own authority. Any settlement other than a total lifting of the Suez blockade will not satisfy Israel, and hints of a compromise such as partial abolition or mitigation of the restrictions would only intensify Israel's concern. Any compromise that might be proposed will fail to get to the root of the problem and will leave it unresolved.

Notes

1. In a telegram to Paris on the same day, Eytan instructed Sasson to return to Ankara forthwith and to follow the instructions contained in the present telegram (Eytan's telegram to the Israel Legation in Paris, TPA215, 22 August 1951, 130.09/2344/9).
2. See No. 340, n. 1.

342. A. Eban to G. C. McGhee. 22 August 1951

Note

1. See report on meeting in Rafael's telegram to Eytan, NWT7, 22 August 1951, 93/01/2203/13.

343. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to D. Ben-Gurion. 23 August 1951

Orig.: IMDEA 128.81/47

Sharett raises the problem of defining the various relations and competencies of the Foreign Ministry and the I.D.F. with respect to the armistice agreements.[1] He asserts that when the armistice agreements were signed, Israel's approach was influenced by two assumptions: that these agreements would be interim arrangements, serving merely as transitional devices towards permanent peace, and that the army would play the major role in dealing with the problems arising in their implementation. Sharett believes that experience largely refutes both assumptions. The armistice agreements have become a permanent feature, and the clearly political nature of implementing them is becoming increasingly evident. It has gradually become clear that the impact of events occurring within the framework of the armistice

agreements transcends the ambit of military issues, and belongs to the web of political complications with which Israel must contend. The fact that peace is slow in coming makes the activities of the Mixed Armistice Commission particularly important in the political sense. These commissions are the only point of contact between Israel and its neighbours. Sharett believes the nature of negotiations in these commissions of necessity affects the entire climate of relations between Israel and its neighbours. Moreover, since the U.N., too, is a partner in the armistice system, the nature of relations between Israeli and U.N. representatives on the Armistice Commissions affects Israel's international status and image. Experience proves that a position taken on some local issue, or a response to some fairly trivial event, may embroil Israeli diplomacy and the entire country in complications. Experience also shows that any dispute in which Israel finds itself involved and any initiative it takes in connection with the armistice system necessarily become part of its relationship with the key powers on the international scene and affect their decisions regarding Israel. Thus France and the United States held up arms sales to Israel because of the Hula dispute, and the ups and downs of this dispute detrimentally affected the possibility of the U.S. adopting a more lenient position towards Israel on its request for a grant-in-aid. Sharett is convinced that anyone approaching the armistice issues from the military viewpoint only is unsophisticated and divorced from reality. While Sharett admits that security is of the highest priority, he insists that the question of security cannot be equated solely with military considerations and that political ones must be taken into account in security issues.

Sharett stresses that if Israel does not wish to rock one of the foundations of the regime on which the state is based by investing the military authorities with the power to make political decisions, Israel must clearly define the status of the Foreign Ministry in the system responsible for dealing with the armistice agreements.[2] To remedy the situation, he presents the following proposals: (a) All army officials concerned with this issue should make sure the Foreign Ministry is informed immediately of any mishap that occurs, any action that takes place, or any problem that may lead to a political complication. (b) The army must inform the Foreign Ministry in advance of any military action planned, so that the Ministry may express its opinion. This imperative applies also to any position the army intends to take in negotiations with U.N. authorities or in deliberations of the Armistice Commissions. (c) The army is entitled to inform the Minister of Defence of its opposition to any guideline or decision presented by the Foreign Ministry. If the Minister of Defence, too, objects to the Foreign Ministry's position, the two ministers will consult; if they fail to reach

an agreement, the matter will be brought before the Government. Until the matter is fully clarified, the army will refrain from mounting any operation or adopting any position to which the Foreign Ministry is opposed. (d) The Foreign Ministry is obligated to provide the army officials in charge of armistice affairs with any information it has acquired on any matter relating to their activity. (e) In order to increase cooperation between the army and the Foreign Ministry, and to ensure exchange of information and opinions between them, arrangements should be made to strengthen mutual relations and ensure that the two bodies consult with each other. (f) The Foreign Ministry's Adviser on Special Affairs should continue to serve as liaison between the Foreign Ministry and the General Staff on all political matters affecting state security and Israel's military relations with foreign agencies, including armistice questions. (g) A special Foreign Ministry representative should act jointly with army officials on the Armistice Commissions, and should enjoy their full cooperation. This representative should take part in General Staff consultations with army representatives on the Armistice Commissions, and should be authorized to participate in meetings of the Commissions and with U.N. representatives whenever the Foreign Ministry sees fit. (h) As in the past, the Foreign Minister and the Ministry Director-General may initiate and participate in meetings with U.N. representatives, with or without the participation of army representatives. In meetings where army officers do not participate, a Ministry representative should report to the General Staff. (i) In any case of a new problem that arises in an armistice context, the Chief of General Staff, his deputy, or an authorized Staff officer should consult with the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry or other persons authorized to discharge this function. (j) The Foreign Ministry is entitled to express its opinion on the fitness of the army's representatives to the Armistice Commissions; the army must take this opinion into consideration.

Sharett clarifies that the Foreign Ministry reserves the right to introduce additional regulations into the arrangement. He adds that if Ben-Gurion accepts his proposal so much the better, and if not, he requests that a discussion be scheduled as soon as possible, since the issues involved will not tolerate procrastination.[3]

Notes

1. For the outbreak of the disagreement between Yadin and Sharett on this subject, see No. 216 and n. 1 *ibid.*, and No. 323.
2. The margins of the pages bear Ben-Gurion's handwritten comments on Sharett's proposals, as follows:
Point (a): "The Foreign Ministry already receives a report within 24 hours."

Point (b): "The army must inform the Minister of Defence and not the Foreign Ministry."

Point (d): "The Foreign Ministry must inform the [General] Staff."

Point (f): "R[euven] S[hiloah] is in charge of intelligence. Sometimes he is not in the country. Preferably with director-general of Foreign Ministry."

Point (g): "Against participation of Foreign Ministry official in sessions, against negotiations between Foreign Ministry official and chairman of Armistice Commission."

Point (h): "Against meeting between Foreign Minister and U.N. representatives."

Point (j): "The paragraph is directed against Ramati. He is loyal to the General Staff."

The following summary is penned at the end of the document: "The orientation and initiative—lie with the Foreign Ministry; the implementation—with the army. Operational methods—via the [General] Staff. Participation of Foreign Ministry representatives in the field is not desirable. The Minister of Defence approves army operations."

3. Several days later, Sharett sent an amended version of his proposals to the Defence Minister and requested his approval. Sharett changed some of the wording in light of Ben-Gurion's comments, but did not really change the substance. In an accompanying letter to Evron he wrote as follows: "I am bound to insist on the right of a Foreign Ministry representative to participate in the Armistice Commission sessions. This is not intended as a permanent practice, but it is inconceivable that we should not be able to participate if necessary. . . . Likewise it is inconceivable that I not meet Riley if I see a need to do so or if he should wish to see me" (Sharett to Evron, 29 August 1951, IMDEA, 128.81/47).

344. S. Bendor (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 23 August 1951

Report: 93.08/338/10

Bendor reports on Horowitz's talk with the U.S. Ambassador on 21 August. Horowitz told the ambassador of the plan to lay an oil pipeline from Eilat to Ashqelon and from Ashqelon to Haifa. The oil would be brought to Eilat from Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. The plan was being discussed with the British government. The venture would cost between eight and ten million pounds sterling, and would take one and a half to two years to implement. Horowitz stressed the plan's economic, political, and strategic advantages to the West, along with its advantages for Israel. The ambassador posed the following questions: (1) If the objective was to bypass Egypt, it should be borne in mind that the Egyptians controlled the Gulf of Aqaba, too. (2) Where would the pipes for the project come from, and who would finance it? (3) Had the Israelis talked with the oil companies? Horowitz answered: (1) It was harder for Egypt to control access to the Gulf of Aqaba than to control the Suez Canal. Violation of the right to enter the Gulf of Aqaba would be a flagrant violation of international agreements.

Moreover, it is easier to provide ships with an armed escort in the Gulf of Aqaba than in the Canal. (2) The financing problem has not yet been resolved. (3) They have not yet approached the oil companies; there is no point in doing so until the support of the governments concerned is assured.

345. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 24 August 1951

Notes

1. Cf. No. 342.
2. Francis Lacoste, French Alternate Representative on the Security Council.

346. W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington (Telegram). 24 August 1951

Note

1. See Nos. 321, 324 and 375.

347. M. Comay [Tel Aviv] to the Bureau of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. 24 August 1951

Report: 130.13/2595/8

Comay reports on a conversation with Chadwick that took place on 20 August at the latter's initiative. (a) Chadwick mentioned the talks between the Prime Minister and Gen. Robertson,[1] and noted that the British were prepared to discuss with Israel about the manufacture in Israel of certain equipment for the British Army. He asked whether Israel was interested in taking up this matter or preferred to include it in a more general framework of discussions. The orders, he noted, would be very small at first. He mentioned the Prime Minister's conversation with the British minister before the latter's departure.[2] Comay availed himself of the opportunity to state the following:[3] (1) The matter depended on the establishment of a new government. (2) It was premature to continue exchanging opinions between Israel and Britain about regional defence as long as the Middle East defence programmes being discussed by the Western powers had not yet been formulated. (b) As for the Jordan River waters, Chadwick said that the Foreign Ministry had welcomed Israel's proposal to meet the Jordanians in order to settle the matter, but feared that the Jordanians

would find it difficult to negotiate under auspices inconvenient to them. Britain was interested in helping out in this context. Chadwick solicited Israel's reaction to two possibilities: that the meeting would be held under Article 8 of the Armistice Agreement, or that there would be a third party to the talks, UNRWA, which was interested in settling Arab refugees in the Jordan Valley. Comay expressed no position, preferring to consult with his colleagues first. (c) Chadwick asked about the Conciliation Commission's invitation to Paris. Comay answered that it was not clear as yet whether one could expect serious results from the Commission, or whether this was merely another measure taken "for the record". Comay explained Israel's position in favour of direct negotiations.

Notes

1. See Nos. 68 and 72.
2. See No. 259.
3. Chadwick gained the impression that Comay's statement represented the Israeli approach and that it was Britain that had to initiate the next step. He also agreed that Israel's representatives had to be brought up to date with regard to the West's plans for a Middle East command before Israel gave its reply to Britain. Chadwick advised Furlonge to discuss the subject with Elath. (See Chadwick to Furlonge, 20 August 1951, PRO FO371/91732.)
4. See No. 324.

348. A. Eban to M. Sharett (Telegram). 25 August 1951

Note

1. 24 August 1951, 93.01/2207/20.

349. M. Sharett to A. Eban (Telegram). 27 August 1951

Notes

1. See No. 345, Paragraph 5. The present reply was formulated in consultations that took place with the Prime Minister, with the participation of Shiloah and the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, on 27 August 1951. See summary of this discussion, 28 August 1951, 130.02/2433/10.
2. 26 August 1951, 93.01/2203/12. In Paragraph 5 of that telegram, Eban wrote that in his letter (No. 313) Riley had referred to only 115 Arabs, evidently from the villages of Baqqara and Ghannama. He advised adhering closely to this text and not mentioning the Arabs of Samra.

3. In the same paragraph, Eban raises several bargaining points: the partition of the demilitarized zone is not within Riley's brief; Israel will not give up the armistice agreement, in which it had achieved a Syrian withdrawal from the waterline, in exchange for a peace settlement; Riley and the Security Council are repeating Bunche's promises about the demilitarized zone, in relation to which the latest Israel concessions are extremely far-reaching.

350. E. Sasson to W. Eytan. 27 August 1951

Notes

1. See No. 341 and n. 1 ibid.
2. Itzhak Ben Yacov, Second Secretary at the Israel Legation in Ankara.

351. E. Najar (Paris) to A. Eban (Washington). 27 August 1951

Coded Tel. PWH5; Inc.: 93.01/2207/20

Najar reports on his latest talks concerning Suez: (1) The director of the Africa-Levant department of the French Foreign Ministry told him on 24 August that Turkey's efforts to transfer the Suez question to the Conciliation Commission should not be taken seriously. (2) Najar met on 25 August with Boisanger, who told him: (a) Aras is not the only one who believes that the Suez question should be transferred to the Conciliation Commission due to difficulties that would arise should Egypt refuse to implement the resolution. (b) The Americans and the English do not accept this view; even the Quai d'Orsay does not support it. (c) Egypt will attempt to delay the Security Council resolution expected next Monday. It remains uncertain whether Egypt will decide to submit the Suez problem to the International Court. Even if it does so, Boisanger does not believe that such a step will prevent the Security Council from adopting a resolution. (3) In his talks with Nicolay,[1] the latter expressed concern that Egypt might not comply with a Security Council resolution. He said that the idea of transferring the Suez question to the Conciliation Commission was motivated by the apprehension that the Arab countries would not attend the Paris conference if the Security Council adopted the resolution. This idea was rejected and an alternative view prevailed in its stead: Egyptian non-compliance with the Security Council resolution would promote the success of the Paris conference, since it would be a counterweight to Israel's refusal to comply with the U.N. resolution on the refugee question.

Notes

1. Christian de Nicolay, French alternate on the Conciliation Commission.
2. Léon Marchal, from July 1951, French representative on the Conciliation Commission.

352. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tel Aviv): Information to the Israel Missions Abroad. 27 August 1951

130.20/2440/11

The subject of the document is the Jerusalem question in the context of the forthcoming U.N. General Assembly.[1] (a) Regarding the prospects of the Assembly's deliberating the issue,[2] there are indications that the Vatican does not wish to see the Jerusalem problem ignored. The Vatican and the Latin American countries have renewed their negotiations in this regard. The State Department hinted to the Israeli representatives that the question might indeed be placed on the Assembly's agenda. Malik indicated in Washington that permanent peace in the Near East depends on strict Israeli compliance with the U.N. resolutions on Jerusalem and the refugees. According to rumour, Palmer hinted to the heads of the Christian denominations in the Old City that there was still a chance that Jerusalem would be internationalized. The local Catholic clergy remains in a state of tension. At the same time, some believe that the Vatican will be deterred by the possible recurrence of last year's failure at the upcoming Assembly, but that it will be interested in having the Jerusalem question continue to engage international attention. One must not ignore the clear link with Vatican policy towards the Arab League. The concept of a spiritual alliance between Christianity and Islam, pledged to safeguarding the East against the materialist doctrine descending on the region from "the northern church", links Cairo and Rome. The nature of this spiritual agreement can be perceived in the conversation between Azzam and the Pope in early 1951, in which the Secretary of the Arab League asked the Vatican to extend its spiritual protection over the Arab countries against the penetration of Communism. This appeal, however, depends on Vatican identification with the League's policy on Jerusalem. It would therefore appear that the Vatican is not so independent in selecting its operating strategy.

In a consultation at the Ministry,[4] the Minister of Foreign Affairs summarized the policy Israel should adopt. He said that Israel should not, by word or deed, draw the world's attention to the Jerusalem problem or to the various proposals raised at the U.N. in recent years for its solution. By the same token, every precaution must be taken to

prevent Israel's being taken by surprise at the General Assembly. It is especially important to be on the alert after Abdallah's assassination, which has led to an atmosphere of instability in the Old City of Jerusalem. McMahon had previously spoken of the need for internationalization in view of the danger of Abdallah's possible assassination. Now that his prophecy has come true, he will presumably renew his proposal. Developments in the near future will prove whether the assassination marked a turning point in the political struggle for the international recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.[5]

(b) Sharett's comments on Eban's memorandum about the Jerusalem problem in the General Assembly: (1) He agrees with the analysis and conclusions Eban presents in Paragraph C. (2) He disagrees with Eban's proposal in Paragraph F(4). At this stage he does not support any explicit Israeli initiative in respect of the countries that tabled the Swedish proposal in 1950. Such a step might be interpreted as an Israeli initiative to put the issue on the agenda. (3) Sharett proposes that all information efforts prior to the Assembly aim at proving that renewed discussion of the Jerusalem issue is neither necessary nor effective. He recognizes the danger inherent in this policy, that in the event that the Jerusalem question should be placed on the Assembly agenda, Israel would find itself unprepared. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that the implementation of internationalization has failed, that the proponents of internationalization have failed to salvage any part of the plan, and that its opponents have failed to implement a more modest programme of international supervision, Sharett believes that the dangers inherent in an Israeli initiative to raise the issue on the agenda outweigh those of an inadequate response to an initiative launched by others. (4) In a conversation previous to that reported by Eban in his memorandum, Waldo had been less forthright when presenting the Jerusalem problem to Herlitz. On that occasion, he had not argued in favour of raising the issue in order to revive the Swedish proposal, but pointed out that Israel would face difficulties in transferring the Foreign Ministry and the legations to Jerusalem unless the Assembly resolved the question of supervision of the holy places, or, at least, unless some such plan was proposed. Waldo's statement implied that if Israel were to agree in advance to postpone the transfer of the Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem for another year, the Americans would not call for a debate on the Jerusalem problem in the next Assembly. (5) At its last meeting, the government approved Sharett's stance: faced with a choice of expediting the Foreign Ministry transfer together with an immediate resolution on U.N. supervision of the holy places, or of delaying the transfer and averting a U.N. resolution, Israel should opt for the latter. (6) Sharett's entire analysis assumes that adoption of the Swedish proposal would place restric-

tions on Israel, and that it should therefore be thwarted. Delay of the transfer of the Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem would be temporary, whereas international supervision could infringe on Israel's independence forever.

Notes

1. The opening paragraph, which introduces the document and its authors, has been omitted. Its substance is summarized below, notes 2 and 5.
2. Sections 1 and 2 of the document were written by Jacob Herzog, the Foreign Ministry's adviser on Jerusalem Affairs.
3. Joseph M. Proskauer, formerly a member of the New York State Supreme Court; honorary president of the American Jewish Committee.
4. See No. 227 and n. 1 *ibid.*
5. Sections 2 and 3 of the document have been omitted. Section 2 deals with preparations for the General Assembly session. Section 3 is Eban's letter to Sharett of 7 August 1951 (No. 310). Sharett responds to it in Section 4, included herein.

353. W. Eytan and G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions in Ankara and Paris. 28 August 1951

Coded Tel.: Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Eytan and Avner, citing reliable sources, inform the legations that the Arab countries are likely to accept the Conciliation Commission's invitation to the Paris conference with the explicit proviso that they will not agree to sit together with Israel for negotiations. It was decided to demand that the powers participating in the Conciliation Commission reject this proviso. The Israeli ministers in Ankara and Paris are instructed to present this demand, using the following arguments: (a) The condition raised by the Arab countries is contrary to the conclusions reached by the Conciliation Commission and presented in its 1950 report on ways of achieving progress towards a solution of the conflict, i.e., that the only possibility of moving forward is through direct negotiations. (b) Israel is convinced that the conference can succeed only by means of direct negotiations, and that the Arab proviso dooms the conference to failure. (c) Israel is not willing to participate in a conference where the other party refuses to recognize its presence and existence. Israel does not wish to help the other side evade tackling the problems in face-to-face discussions.

354. B. Niv (Bucharest) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 28 August 1951

Coded Tel. RI775; Inc.: 130.09/2296/11

Niv reports an interview with the Rumanian deputy foreign minister, in which the director of the Middle East Department also took part. The talk was very cordial. Niv thanked the deputy minister for having permitted Jews to emigrate, and expressed the hope that this flow would continue. In reply, the deputy minister noted that the question of emigration is within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior, which receives requests from any Jew wishing to emigrate. Niv and the Rumanian official also spoke of improving bilateral diplomatic and commercial relations, and of both countries' desire for peace and stability.

Note

1. Niv had been nominated chargé d'affaires *ad interim* in Rumania.

355. W. Eytan to E. Elath. 30 August 1951

Notes

1. Eban's telegram to Sharett, X323, 29 August 1951, 93.01/2203/13.
2. At the Security Council session of 29 August, the Soviet delegate demanded a postponement of the vote on the British draft resolution to 1 September, while hinting that he would exercise the Soviet veto if the request were not granted.
3. Eytan sent a similar telegram to Fischer (30 August 1951, 130.09/2344/9).

356. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions Abroad. 30 August 1951

Coded Tel. MT78/79; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

(1) Eytan enumerates some of the presumed motives for Soviet involvement in Suez[1]: (a) a desire to weaken the Security Council, which may serve as a tool of American coercion; (b) an aspiration to win over the Arabs; (c) an intention to hinder Western initiatives and interests with respect to shipping through the Canal and to the prospects of increased Western control over the Middle East in general. (2)(a) An analogy may be drawn between Soviet conduct on

Suez and modification of Soviet policy on Jerusalem. The Soviet Union's propensity to invoke manipulations and manoeuvres in dealing with the problems of the Middle East, and its lack of a substantive position, are conspicuous in both cases. (b) The Soviet initiative did not come as a total surprise to Israel. A positive Soviet tendency towards Egyptian claims was particularly perceptible in a recent conversation with Gromyko in mid-July.[2] (c) It is uncertain whether the Egyptians had prior knowledge of the Soviet intentions. (d) The Soviet move may unify the ranks of those supporting the current draft resolution, and bring vacillating countries such as Yugoslavia, Turkey, and France around to their point of view. (e) Israel is not inclined to believe that the Soviets will actually use their veto power on the Suez issue. If the Three Powers' proposal receives a sufficient majority and is defeated by the Soviet veto alone, Israel should not construe the result as an out-and-out political defeat. (f) Underlying the Soviet action is an assumption that relations with the West are fundamentally negative, and thus the Security Council members who favour the draft resolution cannot influence the Soviets in this matter. The only consideration that may affect the Soviet Union's stance is its relations with Israel.[3]

Notes

1. See No. 355, n. 2.
2. See No. 275.
3. In another telegram, Eytan related that there had recently been Soviet messages in favour of nationalization of the Suez Canal Company and abrogation of the special British or American privileges. He expressed the fear that Egypt would take advantage of the Soviet position to extort concessions from the West. (Eytan to Israel Missions Abroad, MTA81, 30 August 1951, 130.09/2377/1.) On the same day, Eytan instructed Eliashiv to request an urgent interview with the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister and to lay before him Israel's arguments concerning the Egyptian blockade of the Suez Canal (Telegram IP560, 30 August 1951, 130.09/2325/5).

357. Meeting: A. Lourie–S. Sarper. 31 August 1951

Notes

1. See No. 313, n. 2.
2. See the report on the interview in Eban's telegram to Eytan, X327, 30 August 1951, 93.01/2203/13.

358. G. Rafael to W. Eytan. 31 August 1951

Note

1. See No. 272.

359. E. Herlitz (Washington) to the United States Division. 31 August 1951

Orig.: 130.20/2491/12

Herlitz reports on a preliminary discussion at the embassy on the Middle East Command. The assumption was that Turkey and Greece will be accepted as members of NATO at the conference convening in Ottawa on 12 September, and that the Middle East Command will be discussed only after this conference. The initiative for a Middle East Command is chiefly British. Britain is thinking in terms of an alliance of all Mediterranean countries under its aegis, perhaps even under British supreme command with British Commonwealth participation. Turkey will play a key role in the M.E. Command. Presumably, all countries in the region will be invited, and each will announce its decision to join the Middle East Command or not. These plans have not yet reached the stage of serious and detailed discussion and they will take many months to implement. Israel will have to seriously consider developments that should be expected to follow the Ottawa conference. Israel's relations with the Arab countries make the implementation of these plans much more complicated. The problem is how to ensure that both Israel and the Arab countries participate in the same defence alliance. The renewal of efforts to arrive at an Israeli-Arab settlement is probably related to the Alliance plan. Israel is liable to face new pressure to make concessions. Israel will have to decide whether it wishes to join such a military alliance and to publicize its decision. Embassy staff members cannot see how Israel can avoid joining such an alliance. They have been talking with the Americans about regional defence plans throughout the year, and Israel has even proposed that raw materials be stockpiled in Israel and its light arms and ammunition be standardized with those of the United States. Talks of a similar nature have been held with General Robertson,[1] after which Israel presented the Americans with memoranda on its economic and industrial capability to contribute to the military effort.[2] Domestic public opinion is unaware of this *rapprochement* with the West and, in particular, with the Western military establishment. To Israelis, American economic aid is one thing, taken for granted, while a military alliance

is an altogether different matter. The first thing to do is to begin preparing Israeli public opinion for this future development. Such an information effort must cover all facets of Israel's relationship with the United States and with the West in general; it should also reach the I.D.F. and its commanders. In this context, Herlitz cannot understand why Israel decided to prohibit publication of the training some of its military personnel had undergone in the United States. Joining the alliance may affect Israel's arms acquisitions. Embassy staff are urging that Israel reconsider its relationship with Britain, since Britain will be a key factor in the Alliance. The decision to withhold from the British the classified documents on Israel's economic capability, despite American requests to the contrary, should be reconsidered.

Notes

1. See Nos. 68, 69, 71 and 72.
2. See No. 239.
3. One sentence concerning the enclosure of a document with the letter has been omitted here.

360. E. Sasson to W. Eytan. 1 September 1951

361. East European Division (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legation in Moscow. 1 September 1951

Coded Tel. MTA83. Inc.: 130.09/2377/1

Sharett summoned Yershov to discuss the Suez Canal case and stressed his disappointment that the Security Council debate had been postponed due to Tsarapkin's last-minute intervention.[1] This delay encourages Egypt to persist with its behaviour, undermining the prospects of Middle East peace and stability. Israel had expected the Soviet Union to join other members of the Security Council in just censure of Egypt. He hopes the Soviet Union will not act against the censure motion. Yershov proffered some trivial remarks and promised to wire his government at once.

Note

1. See No. 355, n. 2.

Editorial Note

Security Council Resolution on the Suez Canal Blockade

On 1 September, the Security Council, by a vote of eight to zero, with three abstentions (China, India and the Soviet Union), passed the following resolution (S/2322). For the full text of the resolution, see Main Volume, pp. 593–94.

362. Meeting: M. Sharett–M. B. Davis (Tel Aviv, 23 August 1951, document dated 2 September 1951)

Report: 130.20/2481/3

The talk was held at Sharett's initiative after the Security Council debate had been postponed again, this time at the request of Turkey.[1] Sharett began by expressing gratitude for the position adopted by the United States in the Security Council debate on Suez. He said he hoped that the U.S. representatives would not be deterred at the last moment, and that the resolution would be passed despite the delays. The ambassador expressed satisfaction with Sharett's opening remarks. Sharett then voiced concern about Turkey's intervention and about the possibility that the whole matter might fall through. The status of the Security Council would be undermined. The ambassador explained that the American aim was to lift the Suez blockade, and that the U.S. government had done everything it could to achieve this objective. The United States believed that no resolutions should be passed unless they could be implemented; the American strategy, therefore, was to give Egypt an opportunity to lift the blockade without the need for a Security Council resolution. These efforts had simplified the task of winning over countries that were vacillating in their support of the Security Council resolution. Sharett reviewed the course of events during the past two years. He said that Israel had postponed its appeal to the Security Council by request of Alexander Cadogan,[2] who believed that one must give normal diplomatic channels a chance. Now that all such efforts had come to naught, the Security Council must issue a ruling. There is an outrageous disparity between the Security Council's treatment of the Hula affair and the tolerance and patience it is showing on Suez. This disparity does not augur well for the Paris talks. Sharett confirmed to the ambassador that the rumour that Israel had accepted the invitation to the conference was still premature. Direct meetings between the two sides, he said, are imperative; only thus is it possible to arrive at any concrete result. Even the

Conciliation Commission upholds this assessment. Israel fears that the conference will fail.

Sharett expressed his gratitude to the ambassador, as a representative of the American people, for the House of Representatives' decision concerning the allocation to Israel.[3] The ambassador replied by noting the American public's affection for and appreciation of Israel and the Jews. This originates in the American people's sympathy for a suffering nation, in addition to religious motives. Sharett pointed out that while the support of American public opinion was very dear to Israel, Israel needed the State Department's support, too. The ambassador went on to say that since his arrival in Israel, he was pleased to have found understanding of the United States and the American tradition. At the end of the talk, Sharett noted that Israel and the United States were about to sign a treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation[4] in Washington that very day, marking a new stage in the history of the two countries' relations. The ambassador concurred, expressing his hope that the relations would become even closer in the future.

Notes

1. See No. 340, n. 1.
2. Sir Alexander Cadogan, one of the British government representatives on the board of administrators of the Suez Canal Company.
3. See No. 332.
4. On 23 August, a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation was signed in Washington between the governments of Israel and the United States. The treaty was ratified by the Knesset on 6 January 1952.

363. M. Sharett to W. E. Riley. 2 September 1951

Notes

1. See Nos. 261 and 298.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
3. See No. 256, n. 4.
4. *Ibid.*
5. The telegram has been omitted here.
6. See Editorial Note, p. 119.
7. See No. 100, n. 2.

364. A. Eban (Washington) to M. Sharett. 2 September 1951

Coded Tel. WIA382; Outg.:93.01/2207/21

Eban agrees with Sharett's assumptions as outlined in a previous telegram,[1] and reports on preliminary talks conducted by himself and Herzog with American army officials. The first move will evidently be the dispatch of an American military delegation to Israel. Negotiations will then continue in America. Eban recommends that this development be given serious thought, especially as to its domestic repercussions. Meanwhile, it has become apparent that presenting Marshall with the memoranda[2] turned into a mere propaganda exercise, because Israel refused to deliver the same documents to the British. The United States is not willing to discuss detailed regional defence plans without British participation. Pentagon officials view Ben-Gurion's talks in America,[3] in which he lavished praise on the attitude of Robertson and Morrison, as a moral commitment to include the British in Israel-U.S. consultations.

Notes

1. Sharett cabled that, in view of the probability that Israel would receive a military assistance allocation from the United States (see No. 348), it was worthwhile to consider already at this juncture the needs and enterprises on which the aid would be expended. He assumed that the nature of Israeli plans was likely to influence the size of Israel's share in the total appropriation. He also proposed that, on the basis of the plans to be formulated, the Israeli representative begin preliminary talks with the Pentagon. Sharett requested a confirmation of his assumptions before approaching Ben-Gurion (IWA710, 28 August 1951, 93.01/2207/21).
2. See No. 239.
3. See Nos. 156 and 170.

365. M. Fischer to G. Avner. 2 September 1951

Note

1. See No. 353.

366. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to E. Elath (London). 3 September 1951

Orig.: 93.04/37/1

Sharett informs Elath of the policy and action that should be pursued intensively in the coming days. In view of the government's critical and steadily worsening financial plight, foreign aid to Israel is now a matter of life and death. Although American aid far surpassed the doomsayers' prophecies, it is still insufficient. The magnitude of U.S. aid must grow, and new sources of aid must be found in other countries. The question is whether one can look to assistance from Britain. Such aid is important not only of itself, but also in that it would break the closed circle of Israel's total dependence on America, a situation fraught with serious implications. Another source of aid, on the eastern side of the Atlantic, would do much to establish Israel's international equilibrium. British aid might spur the Americans to be even more generous towards Israel. Moreover, due to the tacit competition that exists between the United States and Britain, the latter might attach more importance to a financial investment in Israel. Sharett emphasizes that at this juncture Israel needs an enormous amount of capital, a fortune, anything it can get from anywhere in the world, and that sterling is the most desirable currency. At its most recent meeting, the government concurred with his statement about the need to raise money in Britain. Sharett notifies Elath that Horowitz will soon visit Britain for initial exploration of the matter, and requests that he focus on this major and urgent assignment. He also reminds Elath about "Horev" and "the painter".[1]

Note

1. The reference is to the idea broached by Ben-Gurion, after Abdallah's assassination, concerning Israeli-British cooperation to occupy the Sinai peninsula ("Horev") and open the Suez Canal. Ben-Gurion proposed that Shiloah and Sharett sound out Churchill ("the painter")—"explain to him that we must reach the Jordan, and perhaps even Suez, and convert the Canal into an international waterway." It was decided to approach Churchill via Isaiah Berlin and to make contact with the British intelligence agent Taylor ("the tailor"). Shiloah left for London to carry out these assignments, but returned disappointed. He told Ben-Gurion that there had been no fundamental change in the attitude of the British Foreign Office towards Israel. The meeting between Berlin and Churchill did not take place. (See Ben-Gurion's diary, 23 July 1951, 1 August 1951, 18 August 1951, IMDEA.)

367. E. Elath to M. Comay. 4 September 1951

Note

1. Comay instructed Elath to meet Morrison and stress the seriousness of the information concerning Iraqi intervention in the forthcoming elections in Jordan. Elath was asked to express Israel's concern at any change in Jordan's boundaries or regime and to request clarification of the British policy in view of these developments (30 August 1951, 130.09/2318/9).

368. M. Keren to the United States Division. 4 September 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 257.
2. Manly Fleischmann, administrator of the Defense Production Administration.
3. Cf. the report on the meeting in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 850–52.

369. Meeting: M. Sharett–J. Blandford (Jerusalem, 5 September 1951)

93.08/339/7[1]

Sharett notes the great importance of the conversation with Blandford, director of UNRWA. Blandford reported on his visit to Arab capitals in February. He had presented the prime ministers and foreign ministers with whom he had met with a three-year plan. The Egyptians responded as follows: (a) The Arab governments cannot be expected to proffer significant financial assistance. (b) They cannot explicitly renounce the principle of the refugees' right of return. (c) They must be given assurances that the U.N., i.e., the United States, is prepared to assume the task of finding a lasting solution to the problem. The other countries responded similarly. Blandford himself supported the approach of "homes and jobs" for the refugees, i.e., a humane and practical approach rather than a political one. He did not directly answer Sharett's question as to whether he intended to implement the plan through the offices of the U.N. or those of the governments involved in the matter. He did say that a fund would be established under U.N. auspices to provide money and techical assistance. Blandford is about to undertake an additional tour of Arab countries. At first he hoped this visit would prove more successful towards the acceptance of his plan. In the meantime, however, several

events that might complicate matters had taken place: the Suez resolution,[2] the decision of the U.S. Congress increasing aid to Israel,[3] and the Conciliation Commission's invitation to the Paris conference.[4] He feared that these events would reinforce the Arabs' negative stance and aggravate their intransigence. In particular, he expressed his apprehension that the Paris conference would further polarize the two opposing sides. Sharett encouraged him to make the tour. Blandford also said that the plan for resettlement in the Sinai Peninsula had been completed except for the water problem, and that there had been progress in the plan for settling the eastern Jordan Valley. He also mentioned a Syrian plan for settling the eastern bank of the Yarmuk.

Blandford asked several questions in connection with Israel: (a) Was Israel willing to solve the compensation issue independently of a general settlement? Sharett answered that even if it were, Israel could not overlook the problem of blocked Jewish assets in Iraq. Blandford did not dispute this. Sharett also raised other Israeli claims such as compensation for war damages and the effect of the Arab embargo on Israel's ability to make payment. Blandford frowned at this comment. (b) Would Israel agree to discuss a water arrangement with Jordan, with the participation of UNRWA, and would it acquiesce to having a team of engineers explore the problem? Sharett answered that Israel had already proposed a direct meeting with Jordan to discuss the latter's claim that the Jordan River had become brackish and shallow, but the invitation had been spurned. The water question was a much broader problem, embracing also the Yarmuk River and Syria. It would be difficult to solve such a vital issue independently of the wider problem of economic relations between the countries. (c) Was Israel prepared to assume responsibility for the refugees in Israel, most of whom were Arabs and a minority of whom were Jews? Such a step would clear the air and improve Israel's standing with the United States. Israel was receiving generous U.S. aid, and was morally obliged to relieve U.N. funds of this burden. Meron, who was also present, pointed out that Blandford had suggested in 1950 that Israel assume responsibility for the care of refugees within its frontiers against a lump-sum payment by UNRWA. By the end of 1950, there had already been talk of payment of slightly more than $1 million. Israel had viewed the proposal favourably, but nothing had come of it. Blandford explained that it had fallen through, among other reasons, for lack of funds. Meron added that another proposal presented a few months ago, under which Israel would assume care of the refugees through its ministries in return for a certain sum per capita, had not been officially presented, despite Israel's positive response. The talk ended inconclusively.

Notes

1. The present document appears in Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 364, 16 September 1951.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 257.
3. See No. 348.
4. See No. 321.
5. See No. 214.

370. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to D. Ben-Gurion. 6 September 1951

Copy: 130.20/2488/3

Sharett believes that Israel must immediately work out its proposals for U.S. military aid now that Congress has approved the Middle East military grant.[1] Presumably, Israel's grant will not fall short of $10 million nor exceed $15 million. Israel will probably have to discuss its plans with an American delegation sent to Israel for this purpose. Sharett argues that it might be useful to present the Pentagon with some Israeli proposals, which would already influence American thinking concerning the amount of the appropriation. One question that must be resolved on the domestic level is whether to earmark the entire sum for purely military needs, or whether to include projects of general economic value such as ports and railroads. Sharett would like to know Ben-Gurion's instructions in this regard, and asks Ben-Gurion to direct those in charge of the matter to keep in touch with the Foreign Ministry's United States Division at every stage of the process.

Note

1. Cf. No. 364, n. 1.

371. M. Comay to E. Elath. 7 September 1951

Notes

1. The appendix has been omitted here.
2. John A. O'Neill, air attaché at the British Legation in Israel.
3. George Edward C. Wigg, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Emanuel Shinwell.
4. The appendix has been omitted here.

372. W. Eytan to W. E. Riley. 7 September 1951

Notes

1. Present at the meeting were: for the U.N.—Riley, Vigier and Taxis; for Israel—Eytan, Shiloah, Dafni, Yadin, Makleff, and Ramati. See report on meeting in document from Ramati to Makleff, 7 September 1951, 130.02/2434/1.
2. See No. 336 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. Henri Vigier, political adviser to the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine.

373. A. Eban to M. Sharett and E. Kaplan. 7 September 1951

Note

1. See No. 348.

374. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 9 September 1951

Coded Tel. MTA89; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Eytan provides the Embassy with the following information: (a) It was announced today that Israel and the Lutheran Federation have reached an agreement resolving all problems pertaining to Lutheran Church property in Israeli territory, including secular property. Most of this belonged to the Federation's German chapter. The accord is based on the return of most consecrated properties, i.e., churches and monasteries, to the Federation for devotional purposes, and purchase by Israel of all secular property, such as buildings, shops, and land. (b) Both parties to the agreement are not interested in publicizing the arrangement, which will transfer many properties of every description into Israeli hands. (c) The accord is important because it is the first comprehensive agreement between Israel and a world church in matters of church property and status in Israel. The Lutherans, influential in the United States, Scandinavia, and the Netherlands, will adopt a position favourable to Israel on Jerusalem affairs in the future. (d) In the meantime it is best not to divulge details. One reason for this is to prevent challenges to the agreement within the Lutheran Church and attacks on the Lutherans by other denominations, chiefly the Catholic. (e) If asked about the agreement, the Embassy should reply that publication is being delayed because several small, trivial details concern-

ing payment still have to be ironed out, and that the agreement will be made public at such time as is agreed upon by the two sides.

375. M. Fischer to E. E. Palmer. 10 September 1951

Notes

1. See No. 321.
2. See No. 324.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 140.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 527.
5. See Vol. 4, No. 372.

376. W. E. Riley to W. Eytan. 10 September 1951

Notes

1. See No. 372.
2. See No. 336, n. 2.

377. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to E. Herlitz (Washington). 11 September 1951

Orig.: 93.08/344/15

Further to earlier correspondence with Herlitz[1] and with Keren[2], Avner answers several points connected with Germany's declaration on the reparations issue. He clarifies that there is no doubt that the government will decide in favour of direct negotiations with the Germans, if the declaration provides the government with any straw it can grasp without losing its respect. He emphasizes that it must be ensured in advance that the declaration is favourable, and that the Americans must be enlisted to this end. Avner instructs Israel's representatives to hint to the Americans that the government is prepared to negotiate with the Germans, and to seek their help in obtaining a favourable declaration. He adds that Israel requires American support in principle for its reparations claim, in order to strengthen its position *vis-à-vis* the Jewish people and the Germans, and directs his staff to approach the Americans. He rejects Keren's evaluation that the Americans will not agree to the Israeli request but will rather give a negative or evasive answer. Avner expresses his surprise at the apa-

thetic response by Keren and Herlitz to the plan to convene the Conference of Jewish Organizations and urges them to prepare to act on this matter.

Notes

1. See No. 333.
2. See No. 330. No other letter of the same date has been located.
3. Cf. No. 403.
4. In File 93.08/344/15.

378. M. Sharett [Tel Aviv] to D. Ben-Gurion. 12 September 1951

Orig.: IMDEA 128.81/47

Sharett asks Ben-Gurion to approve his proposal on the Hula project: (a) A three-member committee would be established to coordinate the actions of all parties involved, comprised of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the General Staff, and the Jewish National Fund (J.N.F.). Sharett suggests Dafni, Hanegbi, and Nahmani.[1] (b) Dafni would be in charge of coordinating the committee, reporting to the Foreign Minister (and, in special cases, directly to the Prime Minister), and implementing their instructions. (c) In all matters pertaining to the Hula project, the General Staff representative would be the sole liaison with the Armistice Commission Chairman and the U.N. observers. (d) The J.N.F. representative would deal with land purchases from Arabs, satisfy their claims directly, and clear away the obstacles they present to the peaceful progression of work. (e) A three-member implementation committee would be established to oversee the drainage work, coordinating all participants in the operation. This committee should comprise engineers and job foremen at the site, one from the J.N.F., one from the Army (Shulman[2]), and one from the Public Works Department (Berger[3]). (f) The implementation committee would operate under instructions issued by the main committee, with Reuven Dafni as the liaison. (g) It would be best to transfer the Palestine Land Development Company's concession for draining the Hula Valley to the J.N.F., and to sever the connection of the PLDC and its local representatives with anything related to the concession and the drainage work. (h) The U.N. representatives should be informed that all matters relating to the concession should be taken up with government representatives, not with the concessionaire. Enquiries should be presented first to the General Staff representatives,

and then, in case of appeal or questions of principle, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Sharett believes the arrangement should be implemented urgently because the rainy season is approaching, and because every possibility of negotiating directly with the Arabs who own the land and dwell in the area should be exploited. These negotiations must be conducted in full coordination with the military and political authorities.

Notes

1. Yosef Nahmani, an official in the Galilee office of the Jewish National Fund.
2. Segan-Aluf Shimon Shulman, liaison officer for heavy mechanical equipment between the general staff and government institutions.
3. Avigdor Berger, deputy director of the Public Works Department in the Ministry of Labour.

379. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv): Guidelines for the Israel Delegation to the Paris Conference.[1] 12 September 1951

130.20/3055/14

Sharett summarizes his assumptions about and guidelines for the Paris conference as follows: (1) The conference was initiated by the U.S. Department of State and seconded by France and Turkey. The question is what the State Department has in mind by resuming the Conciliation Commission's work. (2) One interpretation is that it wants to pave the way for abolishing the Commission in the next Assembly. (3) This explanation does not suffice; there is no need to stage an additional failure of the Conciliation Commission as a pretext for disbanding it. At the same time, the hypothesis that the objective of the State Department is to disband the Commission and establish a new mediation mechanism on its ruins should not be dismissed out of hand. (4) It is more reasonable to surmise that the conference is to be imbued with real, not only procedural, importance. The State Department is interested (a) in demonstrating U.S. sympathy for the Arab countries in order to rectify the impression of pro-Israel bias as manifested in the Export-Import Bank loan, the grants-in-aid, and the Security Council resolution on Suez, and (b) in a more vigorous effort to advance towards Middle East defence stability, achievement of a united Western effort in this area, and avoidance of unnecessary complications and risks. Israel should brace itself for renewed pressure in view of this policy. (5) One of the most obvious indications that this assumption is correct is the Conciliation Commission's declared intent

to stop confining itself to mere conciliation in favour of venturing into active mediation by launching its own initiative, by presenting both sides with compromise proposals. These proposals will have to be based on Israeli concessions and may harm Israel's situation, yielding nothing in return. (6) The Paris conference should be regarded as a transitional stage towards the Assembly. By giving certain proposals its seal of approval, the Conciliation Commission means to signal to the Assembly that they are sound and worthy of majority support. The State Department finds it convenient to clothe its initiative in a mantle of U.N. recommendations from the very start, rather than to expose them as having been "made in the U.S.A." This represents a further danger for Israel. (7) In view of the aforesaid, a dual strategy should be employed. First, Israel should pre-empt the anti-Israel offensive with a counteroffensive. Second, Israel should make an outward display of unity of ranks with the Commission, i.e., the U.N., and minimize the area of disagreements between them. It should blunt the effect of its rejection of certain proposals that the Commission may present by being amenable to other proposals. The impression that the Commission enjoys the Arab countries' full support, with Israel in lonely opposition, should be avoided. It is therefore necessary to build bridges to the Commission and drive a wedge between it and the Arabs. (8) Israel's general attitude towards the problem is articulated in its reply.[2] (9) To implement the first of the aforementioned tactics, Israel should condemn the Arabs' refusal to enter into direct negotiations, their explicit rejection of the very idea of peace with Israel, and their continued hostilities. The Israeli representative's opening speech to the Commission articulates these points. In subsequent appearances, the Commission must be kept under constant pressure to force the other side to accede to direct negotiations. This pressure should be accompanied by relentless warnings about sliding down the slippery slope of the wording of the Commission's compromise proposals. (10) Israel should open with a positive gambit, presenting a detailed proposal for comprehensive negotiations leading to permanent peace, with the following major points: (a) distinction between questions that can be discussed only in direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries, and those that should be explored between Israel and the U.N.; (b) establishing the basic rule of separate negotiations between Israel and each of the neighbouring countries; and (c) drawing up an agenda suited to each of the four Arab countries. (11) If the Commission starts out by proposing that Israel make certain concessions to the other party, Israel should reply by asking what it stands to gain by doing so, and what lies behind the Commission's confidence that Israeli concessions would mitigate Arab recalcitrance: they might achieve the opposite effect, convincing the Arabs that the Commission can be used to extract further unrequited concessions. (12) The tactic of burdening the Commission with questions to which

reasonable replies cannot be easily provided must ultimately be concluded with the explanation that singling out specific and marginal issues for separate treatment is not conducive to progress, and that there is no alternative to comprehensive deliberations on the full range of problems. Israel should refrain, as far possible, from flatly and officially refusing to discuss any question, although on certain matters there may well be no alternative. Such efforts at explanation and persuasion, combined with the posing of unanswerable questions, may induce the Commission to change its current procedure. (13) Israel should express its opposition to any attempt to bring before the conference questions presently being deliberated by the Mixed Armistice Commissions. It should be explained unequivocally that any attempt to duplicate the discussions and circumvent the Armistice Commissions would negate the essence of the Paris conference and undermine the Armistice Commissions' authority and *raison d'être*. (14) In keeping with the tactics described in (7) above, Israel should prepare to raise with the Commission the matter of compensation for abandoned lands, presenting it not as a bone of contention between Israel and the Arab countries but as a matter of responsibility shared by Israel and the U.N. Israel has always acknowledged its obligation to compensate the owners of abandoned land. This is a grave, far-reaching humanitarian issue, which weighs upon the U.N. and which Israel is interested in solving. As long as the question is presented within this framework, Israel is under no obligation to explore it in combination with other concerns. If it is presented as part of negotiations with the Arabs, Israel will also raise its demand for war compensation from the Arabs. (15) Separating the compensation problem from other issues does not mean willingness to accept obligations unconditionally. The major condition should be the nullification of any U.N. demand and programme to return Arab refugees to Israel. The second condition is that the compensation money be used for the resettlement of the refugees and their permanent rehabilitation in the Arab countries. The third condition is that a U.N.-Israel agreement mean that Israel has discharged its obligations towards the refugee problem. (16) It should be stressed that Israel's willingness to discuss compensation does not mean that Israel has waived its claim for war-damage compensation from the Arabs. Also, when negotiating with the U.N. Israel intends to demand offsetting the monetary equivalent of blocked Jewish assets in Iraq against the compensation to the Arabs. (17) As for Israel's domestic considerations, its assistance towards solving the refugee problem should not be regarded as a unilateral concession. Israel has already come out of this affair with two major gains: lands have come under its control, and the overwhelming majority of its Arab residents have left. Failure to resolve the refugee problem, of which the payment of compensation is a part, is seriously impairing Israel's international status. A partial resolution would spare

Israel much trouble in the future. (18) The major element of the compensation programme is the provision of aid to Israel by means of loan or grant, so that it can meet its commitments. (19) Notwithstanding everything said in the briefing, Sharett does not authorize the delegation to acquiesce officially to the compensation plan outside the conference setting. He will issue a special directive to this effect when the time comes. In the conference's first stages, the delegation may hint that the matter is negotiable, always mentioning the property of the Jews of Iraq. The delegation should emphasize the practical connection between the problems of compensation and peace, because Israel will be able to meet its yearly payments only insofar as its economic abilities permit, and these are impaired by the absence of peace.

Notes

1. Sharett handed the present document to the delegation when he visited Paris on 13 September en route to New York.
2. See No. 375.
3. In a marginal note marked here in the original, Sharett jotted: *tegar* ('challenge').
4. See No. 214.

380. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to M. Amir (Brussels). 12 September 1951

Copy: 130.10/2550/3

Avner replies to Amir's letters of 28 and 31 August[1] on the Jerusalem question. (1) Amir is instructed to encourage Belgian Foreign Ministry officials to act within their Ministry against the internationalization of Jerusalem. They should be persuaded that even a Catholic state sometimes has to counsel the Church on its policy, lest the Catholic world and the Church appear ridiculous by displaying pointless intransigence. Furthermore, from the Pope's reply to the Belgian Foreign Minister, quoted in Amir's letter, it would seem that the Vatican does not forbid Catholic states to assume responsibility and modify previous decisions in favour of implementable ones. Hints have been dropped on more than a few occasions, citing the Church itself, that if the Assembly adopts a practicable resolution on the initiative of the Catholic states or other parties, the Church will adjust to the new situation. With this in mind, the Belgians can be encouraged to marshall their courage and act in accordance with the Pope's reply. In response to Amir's question about how to explain Israel's position on Jerusalem to the Belgian delegation in the General Assembly, Avner writes that

the directive at present is to avoid discussion of this topic as much as possible. He will inform Amir of any change in this policy.

Notes

1. Both in File 130.10/2550/3. In the first letter, Amir reports on his conversation with the Belgian minister to Israel. The minister reported on his talks in the Belgian Foreign Ministry, from which he had gained the impression that there is a policy dispute within the ministry between the senior civil servants and the Foreign Minister concerning the internationalization of Jerusalem. Whereas the Foreign Minister "remains firmly committed to internationalization", all the senior civil servants are of the opinion that internationalization is not practical and that the Belgian line on the issue does not promote friendly ties between Belgium and Israel. According to him, the Foreign Minister holds that the Church has legitimate interests in Jerusalem and that it is up to it to decide whether to abandon the principle of internationalization; but so long as the Church supports the General Assembly's calls for the internationalization of Jerusalem and has not changed its instructions on this matter, Belgium cannot change its policy. The minister related that the Pope, in his conversation with the Belgian Foreign Minister, had spoken in the following vein: "You in the United Nations passed a resolution. . . . Carry it out if you have the ability to implement a resolution you have passed, or change it, but on your own responsibility. . . . We, the Church, have not shifted from the solution we found, which is the one that guarantees the holy places."

   In the second letter, Amir requested instructions on how to present Israel's position on the Jerusalem issue in preparatory talks he intended to hold with members of the Belgian delegation to the U.N. General Assembly.

381. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to M. Amir (Brussels) and D. Levin[1] (The Hague). 12 September 1951

Copy: 130.10/2537/19

Avner replies to two letters about Israel-Netherlands relations: one by the minister to the Netherlands dated 29 August, the other by legation adviser Levin dated 4 September.[2] The two officials disagree about the origin of Dutch hesitancy towards Israel: the Netherlands' relations with the Arab world, as argued by Amir, or the influence of the two Dutch Foreign Ministry officials who are most influential in Israel affairs, as argued by Levin. Attempting to adjudicate the argument, Avner explains that the Netherlands wishes to avoid complications with the Arab world; therefore, its friendship for Israel notwithstanding, it hesitates now and then, and tries to take a public even-handed attitude in speeches and appearances in the Security Council. In this respect he vindicates Amir's position. Avner emphasizes that no country in Europe disregards the Arab world, and that there is no objective

reason for the Netherlands to be an exception. Furthermore, the Netherlands is especially sensitive to humanitarian issues and the cause of justice, thus explaining its sincere concern for the refugees, which it invokes in order to show its even-handed posture. Replying to the minister's letter of 30 August,[4] Avner writes that the government is becoming increasingly aware that the refugee issue must be removed from the international agenda by means of a fair compensation arrangement between Israel and the U.N. As soon as a practical decision is taken on this, he will inform Amir.

Notes

1. Daniel Levin, Counsellor at the Israel Legation in The Hague.
2. They were both sent to the West European Division and are found in file 130.10/2537/19.
3. In the original, erroneously: to summarize.
4. In file 130.10/2550/16.
5. Thus in original. Should read: we shall release.

382. Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Information to the Israel Missions Abroad. 13 September 1951

130.02/2443/9

Sharett sends excerpts of correspondence between Amir and Avner[1] to his representatives, and provides them with guidelines on Jerusalem. If Israel's representatives are asked to make a statement concerning Israel's willingness to cooperate with parties proposing a new arrangement for Jerusalem, they are to refer the enquirers to the Arab side by stating that all plans for an international settlement concerning the holy places had failed because the Arabs, i.e., Jordan, had refused to cooperate. Jordan's refusal is decisive, since the major holy places are in the area under its control. Israel has spent much effort exploring the possibility of an international settlement, but in vain. In Israel's opinion, the situation in Jerusalem has stabilized and access to the holy places is guaranteed. Preserving the *status quo* is preferable to questionable attempts to create an arrangement divorced from reality. However, if there is a serious intent to provide concrete expression of the U.N.'s authority in this matter, Jordan must be approached, not Israel. If Jordan balks, there is no point in continuing. Only if Jordan shows willingness to cooperate will there be any point in approaching Israel. Sharett clarifies that the response he suggests should apply not only to a proposal for U.N. supervision of the holy places but also to

the plan for an enclave embracing Christian and Jewish holy places inside the Old City wall and the Mount Zion strip outside the wall. The latter plan would be worth discussing only if Jordan agreed to waive its sovereignty over much of the Old City, and this possibility is, by all indications, out of the question.

Notes

1. No. 352.
2. Paragraphs 1 to 3 of the document have been omitted here. These contain excerpts from the correspondence between Amir and Avner, the substance of which appears in No. 380 and in n. 1 *ibid.*
3. See No. 352.

383. S. Eliashiv (Moscow) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 13 September 1951

Coded Tel. 755; Inc.:130.09/2325/6

Eliashiv reports on a cordial talk with Vyshinsky,[1] who displayed interest in Israel's problems. Eliashiv reported on immigration from various countries and noted the contribution of Russian immigration to the Zionist enterprise and the merit of East European immigration because of its high cultural calibre and its allegiance to the fundamental social values of this enterprise in Israel. Vyshinsky lavishly praised the Jewish people for its ability to accommodate immigrants, and expressed encouragement and confidence in Israel's ability to overcome all its difficulties. When Eliashiv commented that these intrinsic characteristics were not enough and that there were problems of professional retraining, Vyshinsky again expressed his confidence that Israel would overcome this obstacle, too. As proof, he cited the manner in which Soviet Jews adapted to new conditions when they relocated to Birobidjan. As for the emigration of relatives to Israel within the framework of family reunification, Vyshinsky agreed that there was no opposition in principle to the emigration of individuals, the only question being which individuals. It was agreed that Eliashiv would present in writing his arguments in favour of the emigration of relatives.[5] Eliashiv was surprised that Vyshinsky addressed him several times as a representative not of Israel alone but of the Jewish People; he even spoke of Russian Jews as being Eliashiv's co-nationals. The talk did not touch on political issues.[6]

Notes

1. Andrei Y. Vyshinsky, Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs.
2. One word is unclear in the original.
3. The word is illegible in the original. Perhaps: political.
4. Thus in original.
5. See S. Eliashiv to A. Vyshinsky, 21 October 1951, 130.11/2502/8.
6. See detailed report on the conversation in Report No. 6 by Eliashiv, 14 September 1951, 130.11/2493/9.

384. D. Levin (The Hague) to the West European Division. 13 September 1951

Orig.: 130.10/2550/3

Pursuant to the Division's letter of 22 August 1951[1] on the Vatican's position on Jerusalem, Levin points out that in his letter of 4 September 1951[2] he had quoted Dingemans' statement, which contradicted the contents of the Division's letter. However, in another conversation on 10 September, Dingemans retracted part of what he had said in the previous talk. He said he had no direct reports from the Vatican. He repeated that the Netherlands was not prepared to intervene actively on Jerusalem, that the Vatican was less firm than it had been the previous year, and that it would be willing to accept a settlement on Jerusalem that had both Israeli and Jordanian assent. Levin believes Dingemans regretted having said too much in the first conversation, and was therefore trying to present the Vatican's position as his own and not as information received directly from the Vatican. Levin dismisses the possibility that Dingemans' statement was intended to pave the way for a new Dutch initiative on Jerusalem, and is inclined to accept his remarks at face value. He is convinced that the Netherlands has indeed decided not to play an active role in the Jerusalem issue.

He adds that if the Netherlands were again to offer its services towards reaching a settlement on Jerusalem, it would do so only for an arrangement that stood a chance of being accepted by both Israel and Jordan, with the Vatican's consent. The Netherlands' political interest lay in maintaining peace in the area and preserving the status of the United Nations. Neither objective would be attained if an aggressive proposal is presented, as the Foreign Ministry believes it will be, and the Netherlands is therefore unlikely to support one. Moreover, Levin believes that Vatican policy is inclined to come to terms with facts and even to initiate a solution that does not meet with its original demands in order to avoid a failure. It may therefore be assumed that if

the Vatican were to decide to launch an initiative, it would prefer to seek a solution along the lines of the Dutch-Swedish proposal.[3]

Notes

1. S. Ron of the West European Division conveyed to Levin information concerning the Vatican's efforts to place the Jerusalem issue on the agenda of the forthcoming General Assembly session. According to reports, a propaganda campaign had been launched by the clergy in Latin American countries. It was said that the Church would oppose any settlement that did not include the refugee issue and guarantee its rights in the holy places. On the other hand, there were hints concerning a readiness on the part of the Vatican to negotiate with Israel if Israel took the initiative. Ron wrote that, according to one interpretation, the Vatican would put particular pressure on the Netherlands with regard to the Jerusalem issue (130.10/2532/18).
2. Levin reported on a meeting with Herman H. Dingemans, head of the Africa and Middle East Division of the Dutch Foreign Ministry. They spoke about Suez and the Hula. Dingemans brought up the question of Jerusalem and said that in his opinion the Vatican's position on this issue had weakened, and Israel could expect an easier battle than in the previous year. He based his statement on Dutch Foreign Ministry sources in Rome (130.10/2516/2).
3. See Vol. 5, Editorial Notes, pp. 676, 698.

385. W . Eytan to W. E. Riley. 14 September 1951

Notes

1. No. 376
2. See No. 372.
3. See No. 336 and n. 1 *ibid.*
4. See No. 246.
5. In his reply, dated 9 September, Riley agreed with the main thrust of Eytan's comments. Concerning the Syrian position, he explained that he was awaiting an answer from Damascus to his proposal for reactivating the Armistice Commission (130.02/2433/10).

386. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 14 September 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer reports on the opening of the Paris conference. Palmer's declaration was submitted in separate sessions with the Israeli and Arab delegations. He asked Israel to reply to his declaration within the next few days. Fischer told him that he was convinced that such a serious declaration would be submitted to comprehensive discussion in the

Cabinet, and therefore the reply would not come so soon. Sharett saw the text before leaving Paris. Fischer is about to hand Palmer Sharett's response, which reads: "There has not been time to examine the declaration in depth, but I was amazed to read the section concerning the repatriation of refugees. This is a very serious matter, since it is strange that the matter of repatriation was singled out for special mention from among all the proposals that the Commission plans to make. This smacks of preemptive appeasement. In a certain sense I am pleased that the matter has come out in the open; now we know what to expect. I thought that we would pursue the issue of payment [of compensation to Arabs], in accordance with the talks that were held with you and Barco in Jerusalem.[2] But raising the issue of repatriation changes the whole argument and introduces extremely serious complications. At present there is no government in Israel that can accept the repatriation of Arabs. There is little chance that our reply will arrive before the end of next week, since the Israeli Cabinet meets on Wednesdays."

Notes

1. Palmer's statement was made at the opening session of the Conciliation Commission meeting in Paris on 13 September. The main points of the statement were as follows: (1) Military operations had ceased, but there had been no progress towards a peaceful settlement of the points in dispute. (2) The purpose of the talks was to seek, through mediation, a solution to the problems that affect individuals (such as the return of refugees and their resettlement, compensation to refugees, war damages and blocked accounts) and countries (borders, demilitarized zones, free-port concessions, fishing, shipping and water rights, transport and telecommunications, control of dangerous drugs and supervision of health matters). (3) It should be borne in mind that the General Assembly had called upon the parties to try and negotiate an agreement in order to find a comprehensive settlement to the problem. It followed that all aspects of the problem were interrelated and individual sections of the resolutions should not be wrenched from their general context. (4) The Conciliation Commission saw a solution to the problem of the refugees in the return of some of them and the resettlement of others in the Arab countries. This solution would impose an obligation upon Israel that it could not accept without guarantees from its neighbours concerning its economic and national security. On the other hand, this solution would require the implementation of regional economic development plans and a regional accord concerning water resources. (The full text is in File 93.08/341/49.)
2. See No. 214.
3. See No. 388 and n. 1 *ibid.*

387. W. Eytan to the Israel Delegation at the United Nations. 15 September 1951

Notes

1. The official text of the Commission's proposals was delivered to the delegations on 17 September. The Arabs accepted the document without further ado. Israel's representative refused to accept it until 21 September (see No. 390, Editorial Note, p. 284, and Nos. 421 and 454). The Commission's proposal was published as United Nations Document AR/54, 17 September 1951, 93.02/175/13.
2. The reference is to Sharett, who was in New York at the time.

388. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legation in Paris. 16 September 1951

Coded Tel.; Outg.: 130.09/2344/9

Eytan agrees with the proposals presented in Telegram 140.[1] He advises Fischer not to reach a final agreement until the arrival of Shiloah, who has discussed the situation with the Prime Minister. He instructs Fischer to bear in mind the following points in forthcoming talks with members of the Conciliation Commission: (1) Any refugee compensation arrangement must not be couched in terms that might give the impression that Israel is responsible for the refugees' flight or plight. (2) Iraq must be included in any agreement to release blocked deposits. The blocked Arab deposits in Israel are worth an estimated IL 5.5 million, while Jewish deposits in Iraq total at least IL 20 million and perhaps as much as IL 30–40 million. (3) A bilateral waiver of compensation claims for war damages is absolutely out of the question.

Note

1. Fischer proposed a two-stage reaction to Palmer's statement at the Commission's opening session in Paris (see No. 386 and n. 1 *ibid.*): to submit an Israeli declaration renouncing hostile activities and expressing a readiness to promote peace in accordance with Palmer's formula; to announce that Israel would respond to the rest of the statement after the Arabs had responded on this issue (15 September 1951, 130.09/2344/8). See also No. 391 and the text of the Israeli response in No. 396.

389. T. Kollek to G. C. McGhee. 17 September 1951

Notes

1. The document has been omitted here. It is found in File 93.08/343/6.
2. See No. 85 and Editorial Note, p. 78.

390. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 18 September 1951

Coded Tel. MTA97; Outg.:130.09/2377/1

Eytan forwards Fischer's report on the Paris conference. Despite the opposition of Aras and Marchal, Palmer stood by his decision to submit the proposals[1] to the Arabs, who, after issuing a statement, accepted them.[2] Palmer and Barco informed Shiloah that without submitting their proposals there was no chance of bringing the parties to the negotiating table. Their proposals are not binding; instead, they resemble motions for an agenda. In the future, they intend to refrain from any negotiations until all parties undertake to issue a declaration of non-aggression. They also intend to talk with each country only on those issues that directly affect it. They beseeched Israel's representatives to accept their proposals for study, arguing that this step would not imply any commitment. Israel's representatives refused, and reacted strongly to the Commission members' refusal to postpone the submission of the proposals.

Notes

1. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See No. 397 and n. 1 *ibid.*

391. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 18 September 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.:130.09/2344/8

In a conversation with Divon, Touqan reported that the Arab delegations in Paris had been instructed to base their action on the U.N. resolutions and to focus on the refugee issue. Their tactic will be to appear to cooperate with the Commission while dragging their feet as best they can. Their initial reaction to the proposals is negative. They intend to procrastinate by requesting detailed proposals that would

clarify the Commission's intentions. Abd al-Mun'im[1] is hardly involved. In the course of their talk, Touqan suggested to Divon that steps be taken against the Iraq-Jordan unification movement. He said he would present a proposal on this matter within the next few days.

The delegation members recommend that the Commission be given the following reply[2]: (1) Reiteration of Israel's belief in direct talks. (2) Israel's acceptance of mediation is dependent upon the procedure and conduct of this process, which must first be clarified with the Commission and the parties concerned. (3) Explicit acceptance of the Commission's attitude that the full scope of the problem must be discussed. (4) Agreement on the need for a preliminary declaration by both sides. (5) The futility of taking a position on details of the Commission's intentions and views before the bilateral declaration is made. (6) Willingness to agree to receive the proposals as a way of clarifying the Commission's intentions, with no commitment whatsoever.

Notes

1. Muhammad Abd Al-Mun'im Mustafa, Egyptian Minister to Switzerland; head of the Egyptian delegation to the Paris Conference.
2. Cf. No. 388 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. See No. 390, n. 2.

392. W. Eytan to M. Sharett. 19 September 1951

Notes

1. See No. 386, n. 1, No. 396, and the Editorial Note on p. 78. The Government meeting took place on 19 September.
2. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. In a personal telegram Eytan added that most of the ministers at the Government meeting had come out strongly against the Conciliation Commission, in particular the Prime Minister, Rabbi Maimon, Dov Joseph and Golda Meyerson. In contrast, ministers Kaplan, Rosen, and Shapira were more restrained and were of great assistance to Eytan. He felt that Sharett's intense activity in the United States would be greatly appreciated by the government (Y11, 19 September 1951, 130.09/2330/2).

393. M. Keren (Washington) to the United States Division. 20 September 1951

Copy: 93.08/342/38

Keren encloses a copy of the aid memorandum presented by Israel to

the State Department.[1] He reports that economic aid to Israel is mentioned in the House bill in two paragraphs: 203, which includes Israel in economic aid to the Middle East without mentioning Israel by name or specifying the amount, and 205, which allocates a $50 million grant "for specific relief and resettlement purposes" pertaining to Israel's refugees. The amount Israel will receive under Paragraph 203 can be expected to fall between $18 million (Senate bill) and $23.5 million (House bill).

Paragraph 205 places Israel in a very difficult position. It was proposed by Congressman Javits as a measure parallel to that supporting Arab refugees; only thus did the bill stand a chance of passing both Houses. The phrasing of the paragraph does not fully take into account the actual situation in Israel. Congress is treating aid to Israel's refugees in the same terms as aid to Arab refugees. It has not taken into account that immigrants to Israel are involved in the country's life, not confined to camps like the Arab refugees. Hence the bill, as phrased, does not meet Israel's economic needs. This contradiction is liable to cause serious problems in utilizing the grant-in-aid, since the American administration is exceedingly legalistic and will follow the letter of the law to the last detail. Keren then mentions a further difficulty: the appropriations calendar. The grant is for a period beginning 1 July 1951 and ending 30 June 1952. Three months have already elapsed and the bill has still not been enacted; more time will pass until the implementation apparatus is activated. By that date, Israel too must be ready for action. The enclosed memorandum attempts to interpret the law by defining relief and resettlement projects as programmes for general economic aid.

Keren is also concerned that the State Department will be in charge of allocating the sums. Officials in the Israeli legation were trying in various ways to prevent a situation in which the State Department is entrusted with the allocation of financial aid to the Middle East. The Appropriations Committee will soon decide whether to approve the budgeted funds; this is the final and decisive stage in passing the bill through both Houses of Congress. The memorandum is an attempt to prepare for the debate by presenting an Israeli proposal on how to utilize the grant.

Note

1. See No. 389 and n. 1 *ibid.*

394. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tel Aviv): Information to the Israel Missions Abroad. 20 September 1951

130.02/2440/11

The memorandum deals with the Jerusalem problem at the forthcoming Assembly.[1] Rumours reaching the Foreign Ministry from various sources—church representatives in the Old City, Catholic consuls in Jerusalem from Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, and South Africa—strengthened the assumption that the Assembly will not be allowed to evade renewed debate on Jerusalem. On the basis of these indications, it may be assumed that the Vatican has decided to risk even the possibility of another setback such as it suffered in the 1950 Assembly; anything to prevent a situation of "silent acquiescence" in relation to the Jerusalem issue. A supreme effort by the Vatican in this direction should be expected. These indications notwithstanding, the policy articulated by the Foreign Minister in his comments on letters by Eban[2] and Amir[3] is still in effect. There are three reasons for this: (a) The possibility that the Vatican is interested in tabling a non-Catholic proposal in the Assembly should not be disregarded. The Vatican assumes that such a proposal would fail, at which point the supporters of internationalization would be able to seek approval for the Catholic position. From a tactical point of view, Israel should avoid drawing attention to anything concerning Jerusalem. Experience shows that the Vatican is interested in showing that Israel's relentless quest for a solution to the Jerusalem problem proves that Israel is not at peace with the approach it is itself presenting, i.e., the *status quo* as the practical solution. There is evidence that the Vatican has met with difficulties in mobilizing the support of Catholic governments. If non-Catholic countries were to present proposals for a solution, the Vatican would find it easier to exert moral pressure on Catholic governments to unite for a counteroffensive and pass proposals more dangerous to Israel than the non-Catholic ones. Therefore, Israel has no interest in bringing up the matter in any form whatsoever. (b) Israel intends to appear in the Assembly this time not as a defendant but as a party that has met its obligations in New Jerusalem and allowed access to the holy places in the Old City. (c) The assassination of Abdallah in the Old City, which demonstrated the instability of the political situation in the Old City, will certainly serve as the background of the debate in the Assembly. Israel had demonstrated stability in the face of Abdallah's murder. Although the assassination imperilled the Armistice, Israel neither violated it nor occupied the Old City as many had expected. Thus Israel proved that its retention of the New City does not signify any preparations to extend its rule to the

Old City. The international community should be made to realize once and for all that linking Jewish Jerusalem to the problem of internationalization is an Arab ruse into which the Vatican was dragged in its yearning to penetrate the Arab countries. In his most recent memorandum, the Foreign Minister re-emphasized that internationalization refers only to the holy places that are under Arab control, and Israel is totally uninterested in new proposals for a solution to the Jerusalem problem. Such a line does not tie Israel's hands in case it is called upon to adopt concrete measures during the Assembly. Rather, it gives Israel latitude to propose, when the time is right, the internationalization of part of the Old City in order to open a passage to the Western Wall. Israel has played down this demand thus far lest mention of the internationalization of the Old City compromise the status of the New City. This does not mean that Israel has renounced its right of access to the Western Wall.

Notes

1. The introductory note, omitted here, states that Jacob Herzog of the Ministry of Religious Affairs composed the present document.
2. See No. 352.
3. See No. 382.

395. A. Kubovy (Warsaw) to the East European Division. 20 September 1951

Coded Tel. 363; Inc.: 130.09/2306/4

Kubovy reports on a conversation with Skrzeszewski,[1] with Sluczański[2] attending. Skrzeszewski confirmed Cyrankiewicz's[3] assurance that the petitions of families who had been denied permission to emigrate would be reinvestigated, and said that he would make inquiries as to the details of execution. He made no commitment as to when he would reply. He denied that an appeals committee had been officially established, and was surprised by the number of would-be emigrants, between 12,000 and 15,000. He tried to downplay the scale and significance of the matter, arguing that many Polish emigrés residing in Israel wished to return, and that the Polish government could not discriminate against Gentiles who sought to emigrate. In reply, Kubovy

asserted that the Jews were indeed entitled to such favourable discrimination, having paid a very heavy price for it, and that the Polish government could not guarantee the Jews' safety in the event of a political upheaval. Kubovy believes that Skrzeszewski was deeply impressed by the latter argument, even though he rejected it.

Kubovy intends to present a detailed memorandum to Cyrankiewicz if he receives no answer from Skrzeszewski. In his opinion, there will be no noticeable progress in the matter unless Israel applies extremely heavy pressure. He proposes that Israel: (1) apply economic pressure on Poland, e.g., in the Stockhammer affair and on vital commodities; (2) instruct Israeli diplomats in various capitals to talk with Polish representatives; (3) put pressure on the Polish Consulate in Tel Aviv by sending delegations of immigrants with relatives still in Poland, but without demonstrations; and (4) issue an official communiqué in Israel, France, and England concerning Israel's dissatisfaction with the way matters are developing.

Notes

1. Stanislaw Skrzeszewski, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs. A detailed report on the meeting can be found in A. Kubovy, Report No. 6, 19 September 1951, 130.11/2493/10.
2. Edward Sluczański, director of the Eastern Department in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
3. See No. 318.
4. Marek Thee, consul in charge of the Polish Consulate-General in Tel Aviv.
5. Dov Tesler (Sattath), the official in charge of Soviet, Polish, and East German affairs in the East European Division of the Foreign Ministry, reported on a party held on 11 July under the auspices of the Israel-Poland Friendship Committee to honour the outgoing consul, Gorka. On that occasion the secretary of the committee, Staszewski, asked Thee if there was any truth in the rumour that the Polish prime minister's appeals committee had not issued a single passport. Thee denied the rumour and said that for certain reasons the committee had ceased issuing individual passports and was concentrating on issuing a large number of passports that would permit a large group to leave Poland. He said that the first group would leave Poland at the end of December, to be followed by no more that two additional groups (130.11/2502/11).
6. The following reply was sent to Kubovy: (a) The argument that Poland could not guarantee the safety of its Jews in the event of political unrest must not be made to representatives of the Polish regime. Even if there is truth to this claim it is liable to arouse a negative reaction. (b) No hopes should be pinned on economic pressure, since Israel's room for manoeuvre was extremely restricted by American trade policy. (c) Spontaneous pressure on the Polish Consulate in Tel Aviv is an ongoing affair. (d) His proposal for conducting talks with Polish envoys in the various capitals will be implemented. (See telegram from East European Division to Israel Legation in Prague, IC592, 27 September 1951, 130.09/2342/14.)

Editorial Note

Israel's reply to Palmer's Statement at the Opening Session of the Paris Conciliation Conference

The following document contains the text of Israel's response to Palmer's statement at the opening session of the Paris Conference on 13 September 1951 (No. 386, n. 1). The response was composed following the cabinet debate on 19 September (see No. 392 and n. 1 and 3 *ibid.*). At that session it was decided to empower Ben-Gurion to draft the response to the Commission. Fischer read out the document to the Commission on 21 September. After its delivery he agreed to accept the proposals, which he had previously refused to accept. (See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*)

396. M. Fischer's Statement before the Palestine Conciliation Commission in Paris. 21 September 1951

Notes

1. The document is taken from Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 367, 20 September 1951.
2. In a note to the document the text of this part of the sentence was amended as follows: "Thirdly, before any proposals are considered".

397. W. Eytan to M. Sharett. 21 September 1951

Note

1. The Arab response to Palmer's statement (see No. 386, n. 1) was submitted on 17 September (see No. 387, n. 1 and No. 390). The full text of the Arab response can be found in Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 367, 20 September 1951, 93.03/3055/14.

398. N. Goldmann and M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 21 September 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Goldmann and Fischer report that Altmaier was dispatched to Paris with a draft of the statement that Adenauer intended to read in the

Bundestag in the middle of next week. After the statement, Löbe[1] will speak for all the parties, announcing the Bundestag's unanimous assent. Fischer and Goldmann suggested a few amendments to the draft. Adenauer is very interested in the public response in Israel and the Diaspora. Goldmann and Fischer informed Altmaier that the response depends on one factor alone: the nature of the declaration. They suggest that the following position be hinted to the press: for the first time, Germany has expressed a wish to discuss reparations in order to remedy relations with the Jewish people. While the initiative is welcome, everything depends on implementation and on German appreciation of the extent of the problems. Goldmann and Fischer request that the possibility of having the Israeli government spokesman make such a declaration be considered.[2]

Notes

1. Paul Löbe, Social Democratic member of the West German Bundestag.
2. For Adenauer's declaration and the response of the Israel government, see Editorial Note, pp. 287–88, and No. 403.

399. E. Elath to M. Comay. 25 September 1951

Notes

1. A detailed report on the conversation is in Elath's letter to Comay, 11 October 1951, 130.13/2582/5. Cf. also Davis's report, 26 September 1951—PRO FO371/91730.
2. At the NATO conference, held in Ottawa on 15–20 September, it was decided to invite Greece and Turkey to join the organization and to extend the mutual security guarantee of the alliance to cover the Middle East. The decision required ratification by the U.S. Senate and by the parliaments of the other member states.
3. Segan-Aluf Katriel Salmon, military, air and naval attaché at the Israel Legation in London; from October 1951 accredited to the Scandinavian countries as well.

400. W. Eytan to the Israel Legation in Paris. 26 September 1951

Notes

1. Fischer reported on his meeting with Marchal. Marchal told him that the Commission was opposed to a non-aggression pact because there was no chance that the Arabs would agree to one. The Commission was considering proposing separate commitments by the two sides expressing progress towards peace beyond the armistice agreements. Fischer requested clear instructions, in advance of the forth-

coming meeting with the Commission, whether to reject separate commitments out of hand and insist on a non-aggression pact at any price. He requested an immediate reply containing the substance of the non-aggression pact proposed by Israel. (Telegram from Fischer to Foreign Ministry, PTA248, 24 September 1951, 130.09/2344/8.)

2. See Rosenne's telegram to the Israel Legation in Paris, TP/226, 26 September 1951, 130.09/2344/9, and No. 405 (appendix).

401. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 26 September 1951

Coded Tel. PTA250; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer cables Eytan with details on developments in the Paris conference: (1) On 25 September the Commission, in separate talks with the heads of the Arab delegations and subsequently in a joint meeting, attempted to persuade them to sign a statement including non-aggression commitments and *de facto* acceptance of the Commission's proposals[1] as a basis for discussion. Although under great pressure, the Arabs refused to sign, announcing that they could make no official response until they received further details on the proposals. (2) As for the non-aggression declaration, the Arabs suggested a phrasing based on the Armistice Agreements but mentioning neither the proposals nor the preamble of the Commission's statement. Palmer, perturbed, rejected the Arab proposal. (3) Shuqairy[2] and others proclaimed that, in their opinion, the Commission was not authorized to deal in matters between countries; its sole function was to implement U.N. resolutions. Shuqairy apparently intends to leave, in order to attend a meeting of the Arab League where he will suggest the policy that the Arab delegation should pursue. (4) Touqan points out that the Arabs were insulted by Palmer's dictatorial approach. (5) Palmer's intention was to combine the non-aggression statements with *de facto* acceptance of the proposals in order to forestall the possibility that Israel would stand firm in its refusal to enter discussions before signing a non-aggression agreement. (6) The impression is that Palmer is constantly being instructed to press the issue, and that the French and Turkish representatives are not influencing the course of events. (7) It is highly improbable that Palmer will agree to consider a more far-reaching phrasing of the statement.

Notes

1. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.* See also Nos. 392 and 396, and No. 400, n. 1.
2. Ahmad Shuqairy, Arab League Undersecretary for Political Affairs and member of the Syrian delegation to the Paris Conference.

402. A. Kubovy (Prague) to the East European Division. 26 September 1951

Coded Tel. P237; Inc.: 130.09/2343/1

Kubovy reports on an "extremely cordial" conversation with Široký on 24 September in which he presented Israel's grievances: (1) After six months of negotiations, the list of the first persons allowed to emigrate shows that the Czechs intend to release the elderly and the disabled only. (2) Their restitution policy constitutes *post factum* justification of the plunder perpetrated by the Germans and their collaborators. Their letter[2] even doubts the intensity of Jewish suffering caused by the persecutions. (3) By unilateral decision, Czechoslovakia has declared the transfer agreement null and void. (4) Israel receives money from Western countries only; whereas even funds raised in Czechoslovakia in the past remain blocked. Široký responded as follows: (1) He is not solely responsible for emigration affairs; there are technical implementation problems, too. However, his intentions are sincere and he is ready to help. (2) He is not aware of the contents of the restitution letter, and will look into the matter. He seems to disagree clearly with whoever drafted it. (3) He does not approve of a unilateral annulment; nevertheless, transfer is connected with trade relations, and the negotiations must be resumed. (4) He will also look into the question of blocked accounts. The minister asked for a memorandum of record on all the issues discussed, and was presented with one by Kubovy the following day.[3] He promised to meet Kubovy again.

Notes

1. Thus in original. Should be: September
2. The letter, dated 5 April, has not been located.
3. See memorandum dated 25 September attached to a covering letter sent on that date by Kubovy to Široký, 130.11/2503/5.

Editorial Note

Israel's Response to Adenauer's Statement in the West German Bundestag

On 27 September the German chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, on behalf of the government, presented to the Bundestag Germany's position *vis-à-vis* the Jews and the State of Israel. The day before (26 September) Ben-Gurion had presented to the Government the text of Israel's

response. The Government unanimously approved the draft, except for the last paragraph, to which one of the ministers objected. The present document contains the announcement by the Government spokesman. For the English translation of Adenauer's statement, see Main Volume, pp. 665–66.

403. Statement by the Spokesman of the Government of Israel (Tel Aviv). 27 September 1951

93.08/344/22[1]

Below is the text of the Foreign Ministry's response to Adenauer's declaration of 27 September in the Bundestag, sent to Israel's representatives abroad:

"The murder of six million Jews at the hands of the Germans under the Nazi regime, accompanied by pillage and robbery on a gigantic scale, has no precedent in the records of civilization. It cannot be erased from the annals of humanity by declarations, however sincere and repentant.

"One-third of the entire Jewish people was destroyed. Immeasurable suffering was inflicted on millions of innocent human beings. Many of the finest and most ancient Jewish communities of Europe were wiped out. For many years to come the Jewish people will bear the scars of the wounds inflicted on its body and soul. For generations the civilized world will stand aghast at the wanton annihilation of one people by another, perpetrated not in war but in a cold-blooded systematic campaign of genocide and spoliation.

"It is against this background that the declaration made by the Chancellor of the German Federal Republic on the problem of Germany and the Jewish people must be viewed.

"The Chancellor's declaration appears to represent an attempt on the part of the Government of the German Federal Republic at last to face this grave issue and to initiate some measure of moral and material reparation to the Jewish people. It is to be noted in particular that the declaration is accompanied by a direct appeal to the German people to divest themselves of the cursed heritage of anti-Semitism and racial discrimination. The recent declarations and activities of the neo-Nazi groups in Germany have seriously disquieted Jews everywhere. It appears significant, therefore, that the German Federal Government now proposes to take legal action against such groups and to embark on educational activities among all sections of the German people for the purpose of uprooting these dangerous trends and intentions.

"It seems that the German Federal Government unreservedly acknowledges that unspeakable crimes were committed in the name of the German people and that this implies an obligation to make moral and material reparation, both individually and collectively. No such acknowledgement has come from the Government of the East German Republic, which is under an equal obligation.

"There is much that the German authorities, central and provincial, can do to accelerate the process of restitution of property and individual compensation and indemnification. It is for them to bring home to those responsible for the carrying out of these measures the overriding moral imperativeness of making speedy and comprehensive amends in the material sphere for the spoliation suffered by the Jews of Europe at the hands of the Nazis.

"It is imperative, furthermore, that the German people undertake a measure of collective restitution to the Jewish people by making a major contribution towards the absorption and rehabilitation of the survivors of Nazi persecution, the bulk of whom have found new homes in Israel. The Government of Israel has notified the Occupying Powers of its claim to such restitution. The claim of the Jewish people, which suffered infinitely more from the brutality of the Nazis than any other people that fell under their sway, stands in a category of its own and calls for special and comprehensive satisfaction.

"The Government of Israel will study the German Chancellor's declaration and will in due course make its attitude known."

Note

1. The document is taken from Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 372, 27 September 1951.

404. G. Rafael (Paris) to W. Eytan. 28 September 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Rafael reports on a "frank and cordial" private conversation with Palmer. First, the Israel government agrees with the United States that the international tension and Middle East defence requisites make the normalization of Israel-Arab relations a necessity. Such normalization must be based on a realistic assessment of the situation. Therefore the Palestine Conciliation Commission has to ensure from the very first that both sides are committed to reaching a final settlement. Palmer agreed that one could not expect a self-respecting government to dis-

cuss the price of peace before the possibility of its achievement is ensured. In answer to Rafael's complaint that the Commission had raised concrete proposals[1] before the parties concerned committed themselves to reaching a final arrangement, Palmer admitted that the procedure had been "maladroit", and that the Commission would have been wiser merely to present motions for an agenda. He suggested that Israel consider their proposals as an agenda rather than as solutions. Rafael suggested that the Commission should restrict itself at this stage to a less ambitious programme. A declaration of non-aggression and an approved agenda would be welcomed by the United Nations.

Rafael's impression is that traditional Arab intransigence will again serve Israel's interests and perhaps even help Israel upset the State Department's applecart. He recommends that Israel step up its demand for a non-aggression treaty and an agreed-upon agenda, and refrain for the present from discussing the proposals with the Commission.

Note

1. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*

405. M. Fischer to E. E. Palmer. 28 September 1951

Note

1. See No. 396, and Editorial Note, p. 284.

406. M. Fischer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 29 September 1951

Notes

1. The announcement was delivered to Fischer on 28 September.
2. See Vol. 5, Appendix B.
3. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
4. Cf. the text of the message in *FRUS,* 1951, V, pp. 878–89.

407. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Legation in Paris. 30 September 1951

Coded Tel.; Outg.: 130.09/2344/9

Eytan informs Fischer of Israel's objective and tactics at the Paris Conference. (1) Three facts were known in advance: (a) the Arabs' objective in the conference was to extract concessions on the refugee issue while refusing to make any concessions of their own on any matter; (b) the State Department would pressure Israel to make concessions; (c) everything must be done to prevent the blame for the conference's failure being pinned on Israel. (2) Israel accordingly sought convenient grounds for a political skirmish in the first stage of the talks, and found it in its proposal for a non-aggression pact.[1] The convenience of this position finds expression in the following: (a) The Commission itself had proposed a general undertaking of this sort before negotiations; (b) No U.N.-affiliated institution could refuse to treat such a proposal seriously and painstakingly; (c) Arab acceptance of the proposal would signify considerable and desirable progress in relations that would facilitate practical discussions; (d) Arab refusal would mean that Israel could attend the General Assembly as the promoter of peace while the Arabs would seem to be obstructionists; (e) An Arab refusal would also vindicate Israel's persistent rejection of practical proposals that were unacceptable to the government, the Knesset and Israeli public opinion. (3) Israel has to brace itself for a protracted struggle on this matter. The Commission will be so eager to dismiss the Israeli proposal that it might even be satisfied only to reconfirm the Armistice Agreements in order to secure the Arabs' consent, but Israel has to be steadfast in its efforts to attain a non-aggression treaty. Israel's major argument must be that the absence of real progress in relations by means of a commitment of this sort is tantamount to a continued state of Arab hostility towards Israel; in such a case, Israel has no interest in discussing practical concessions to the Arabs. Israel should buttress this argument by noting that the Arabs had previously committed themselves to a similar phrasing, making Israel's proposal a mere extension of an existing commitment. (4) Disputation with the Commission should be avoided during the struggle. Israel should make it clear that its proposal for peace and non-aggression is not merely tactical, but that neither would it refuse to discuss a similar formulation proposed by the Commission. The same approach applies to the matter of direct negotiations. Here, too, Israel must stress that direct negotiations are the correct way to proceed, while not rejecting out of hand the possibility of a different procedure. (5) If there is no progress on non-aggression, other formulations can

be agreed upon, in the following order: (a) If separate non-aggression treaties with each country are unattainable, Israel is willing to accept a general Arab commitment. (b) After some further time has elapsed, Israel will consider a formulation for a general commitment proposed by the Commission itself. If a deadlock develops and the Commission proposes nothing more than a reconfirmation of the Armistice Agreements, Israel should announce that it will consider the matter. Meanwhile, the Commission must be encouraged to demand a more serious commitment from the Arabs along the lines of the draft non-aggression pact. (6) It should be borne in mind that the whole struggle for non-aggression is meant to gain time and prepare Israel's appearance in a favourable light in the United Nations. Like Lausanne, Paris must be viewed as the arena for a war of nerves in which Israel's position may be tenable so long as it utilizes the tactical advantage it gained by proposing a non-aggression treaty.

Note

1. See No. 405 (appendix).

408. E. Sasson to W. Eytan. 30 September 1951

Notes

1. In File 130.02/2382/2.
2. See No. 341, n. 1.
3. See No. 152, n. 1.
4. See Sasson to Elath, 21 September 1951, 130.02/2382/2.
5. See No. 405 (appendix).

409. M. Sharett (New York) to W. Eytan. 30 September 1951

Coded Tel. X407; Outg.: 93.01/2203/14

The telegram is intended for Ben-Gurion and Kaplan. Sharett reports to them on the following developments: (1) Grant-in-aid: (a) The Senate-House conference committee has approved a ceiling of $68.8 million in aid to Israel, including $50 million for immigrant absorption. Its report will be presented to both houses in a few days; once passed by them the authorization bill will await the President's signature. Then the appropriations bill will be considered by the House and

Senate Appropriations Committees and, finally, debated on the floor of both houses. The going will not be easy in any of these stages; the bill has serious opponents who complain about discrimination against the Arab countries and decry the refugee problem. (b) In the meantime, the question of which agency will implement the allocations is being debated. The State Department assumes that it will do so, through the Technical Cooperation Administration. The other candidate is the Mutual Security Agency. The matter has not yet been resolved, but the State Department has already appointed a special envoy to visit Israel in November to discuss allocation objectives. (c) After consultations in the embassy, it was decided to make efforts to have implementation entrusted to the second of the two agencies, which is more kindly disposed towards Israel. Still, contact should be maintained with the State Department concerning its preparations. (2) Military aid: (a) An allocation of $39.6 million, i.e., free weapons, has been approved for the entire Middle East, and it will also be possible to buy large quantities at low prices. (b) For the President to confirm Israel's eligibility for military aid, Israel must initiate such a request. (c) Once approval is obtained, the procedure is that a survey commission is sent to examine Israel's needs. This commission will demand full details about Israel's arsenal and about how the formations to receive the weapons are organized. (d) Once the quantity of weapons is approved, a military delegation will come to deliver the weapons and instruct the Israelis in their use. It is possible to request civilian cover for the survey commission and the military delegation. (e) In the case of Yugoslavia, which can serve as a precedent, no survey commission had been sent. However, the Yugoslav Chief of General Staff visited Washington and met the Chiefs of Staff, and Tito declared that Yugoslavia would fight with the West. (f) Kollek and Herzog are convinced, and Eban is inclined to agree, that unless Israel first applies to the Americans as stipulated in Paragraph 2(b) *supra*, implementation of the grant-in-aid, which is riddled with pitfalls in any case, may be sabotaged.[1] Kenen, who coordinated grant-in-aid activities in both houses of Congress, admits that those in favour of aid were prompted mainly by defence considerations. At the same time, he disagrees with Kollek's and Herzog's assumption that the grant will not go through unless Israel puts in for military aid first. Sharett disagrees with Kenen. (g) Herzog is sending the General Staff a detailed report[2]; a decision will be taken when Sharett returns.

Notes

1. By way of follow-up to Sharett's statement, Eban cabled Eytan on 4 October as follows: "Pending further clarification and inquiries here I cannot subscribe to the idea

that by refraining from requesting military assistance, in accordance with the plan outlined in the telegram, we sabotage our chances of receiving the grant-in-aid. The matter is complex and complicated. For example, it is possible that as long as the Arabs do not wish to request their share of the military assistance package the U.S. government will not be overly eager to send delegations to us. I favour taking advantage of the military assistance *per se*, but at the present juncture without asserting that the fate of the grant-in-aid depends on it" (XA416, 4 October 1951, 93.01/2203/14).

2. See Herzog's report, entitled: "The Problem of the American Military Assistance Bill", 5 October 1951, 130.02/2488/3.

410. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 2 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer's report on his talk with Hamilton Fisher focuses on the following points: (1) The Conciliation Commission suspects Israel of throwing a spanner in the works by bringing up its non-aggression pact proposal; he is pleased to hear that Israel does not intend to be intransigent. (2) The Commission looks with disfavour on Arab attempts to water down the preamble to the Commission's proposals, but also opposes Israel's excessive demands on this issue. (3) Hamilton Fisher requests that the presentation of the draft non-aggression pact not be publicized,[1] since this might jeopardize negotiations he is conducting with the Arabs on the issue. (4) He asks how the government will respond if the Commission asks Israel to sign the preamble and declare its readiness to discuss the proposals forthwith.[2] (5) Fisher admits that the Arabs have not yet displayed willingness to reach a settlement, and that Israel is justified in claiming that there is no point in going to special lengths to solve specific problems as long as the Arabs do not change their position. The Commission intends to explain to the Arabs at their next meeting that although it is bound by Assembly resolutions, these are simply recommendations. Israel cannot be expected to take steps towards solving the refugee problem if the Arabs themselves are not willing to promise Israel political and economic security in return. (6) The Commission is considering not publicizing the discussions of the proposals it intends to make to the two sides.

1. See No. 405.
2. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*

411. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 2 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer reports on Barco's conversation with Divon: (1) The Commission acknowledges that the Arabs' refusal to sign a declaration of non-aggression may torpedo the conference. Barco believes that the Commission will eventually be willing to accept an Arab declaration of non-aggression that makes no reference to the preamble, as long as it includes a commitment to the peaceful solution of matters of controversy. (2) Although Barco admits the logic of Israel's position on the non-aggression pact, he does not think the Arabs will agree to affix their signatures to it.[1] He hopes Israel will be flexible. He agrees that Israel has every right to ensure that the wording of the declaration leaves no loopholes or room for interpretation along the lines of Egypt's interpretation of the Armistice Agreement. Abd al-Mun'im informed Barco that very morning that the Arabs had no intention of accepting Israel's non-aggression proposal. (3) Barco listened attentively as Divon explained the advantages of drawing up an agenda for the Commission as a way out of the impasse. (4) As for the refugees, he believes it worthwhile to resume consultations with respect to the Palmer-Barco plan.[2] He suggests that Israel inform the Americans that it is prepared to accept the plan under certain conditions, in order to open the way for discussion. When the time is right the matter will be transferred to the Conciliation Commission, which will then be able to recommend the plan to the Assembly. (5) On several occasions during the talk Barco stressed the need for a speedy settlement, but made no attempt to deny that no avenue to such a settlement was in sight. (6) He also stated several times that Israel would make the Commission's task much easier if it declared its willingness to study the Commission's proposals. (7) He suggested that close unofficial contacts be continued.

1. See No. 405.
2. See No. 214.

412. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 3 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer reports on the course of the Paris conference. Before the Commission met with the Arabs, Fischer met Palmer and Barco and

asked them to show the Arabs the draft non-aggression pact that Israel proposed.[1] He said Israel expected the Commission to discuss its proposal seriously and show it to the Arabs as proof of Israel's peaceful intentions. Palmer took a dim view of this idea; the Commission, he said, would discuss Fischer's request but he was of the opinion that there was no point to it under present conditions. Fischer stood his ground, adding that Israel would not be content with any Arab commitment that did not correspond to the Security Council resolution of 1 September.[2] He asked the Commission to show Israel in advance any formulation agreed upon by the Arabs and the Commission, and pointed to the difficulties that might arise if Israel were presented with a *fait accompli.* They expressed their conviction that the non-aggression accord should be a step forward in relation to the Armistice Agreement, and that they had no intention of acceding to anything less than what was stated in the preamble.[3]

1. See No. 405.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 257.
3. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*

413. D. Horowitz to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 3 October 1951

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 287–88.

414. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to M. Fischer (Paris). 3 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2377/1

Eytan responds to the reports on the Paris conference. (1) He is encouraged by Fischer's latest telegrams,[1] which show that Israel's tactical position is not bad and that the delegation is off to a good start. (2) He warns Fischer about Hamilton Fisher, who does not sympathize with Israel by any means, and who tends to invoke deception and trickery in talks; Fischer should be wary about drawing conclusions from anything he says. Barco, by contrast, is a sincere man with influence in his delegation; it is worth cultivating relations with him. (3) In its next meeting with the Commission, Israel must continue to insist that the Arabs issue a general assurance and commitment before discussion of practical issues begins. The Commission accepts this stance, and it bears repeating. (4) In order to show flexibility,

Eytan instructs Fischer to do the following, in the order presented: (a) clarify that Israel is not demanding a peace treaty and nothing else at the present stage, as the State Department thinks. Israel is willing to settle for a non-aggression pact as a step towards peace, thus showing moderation. (b) As a first concession, if necessary, Eytan instructs Fischer to agree to a general declaration similar in wording and spirit to the non-aggression pact. (c) The second concession, if required, will be Israel's assent to discuss the Commission's preamble[2] as a basis for a general commitment; in such a case, however, Israel will request stronger phrasing. (d) Israel cannot drop its demand for a general Arab commitment as a test of their readiness to make progress in relations with Israel. (5) Fischer may add that once the matter of a general commitment is resolved in a satisfactory manner, Israel will be prepared to discuss several issues in a positive spirit, e.g., blocked accounts, as Israel had already informed Palmer,[3] and refugee compensation as discussed by Sharett with Palmer and Barco.[4]

Notes

1. See Nos. 410–12.
2. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. See No. 386, n. 1.
4. See No. 214.

415. E. Elath to M. Comay. 4 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 399, n. 2.
2. Field Marshal William Slim, Chief of the British Imperial General Staff.
3. See Elath to Comay, 9 October 1951, 130.13/2582/5.

416. S. Eliashiv (Moscow) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 4 October 1951

Coded Tel. PI767; Inc.: 130.09/2325/6

Eliashiv reports having visited the Moscow Synagogue on both days of the Rosh Hashana festival. Thousands of worshippers, most of them young, packed the hall. A tense atmosphere surrounded the legation members. The worshippers were afraid of approaching them. A few did attempt to exchange words, and two managed to hand the diplo-

mats important information on the situation of the Jews. Agents inside the synagogue kept the Israelis under surveillance.

417. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions in London, New York, Washington, and Ankara. 5 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See No. 406.
3. See *FRUS,* 1951, V, p. 881.

418. W. Eytan to the the Israel Missions in London and New York. 5 October 1951

Notes

1. Alexander L. Easterman, political secretary of the World Jewish Congress in the U.K.; vice-president of the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland.
2. Noah Barou, chairman of the European Executive of the World Jewish Congress; member of the British Board of Deputies.
3. Horowitz was not in favour of the idea of a preliminary meeting with the Germans and recommended opening direct and binding negotiations at a neutral location in a few weeks. (Telegram LI919, 8 October 1951, 130.09/2319/1; cf. Sharett's answer in telegram X431, 8 October 1951, 130.09/2330/7.)

419. E. Halevi[1] (Rome) to G. Avner. 5 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2356/2

Halevi reports on a talk with Tallarigo, director of the Middle East Department of the Italian Foreign Ministry. The talk touched upon the Paris conference, but Halevi makes special mention of Tallarigo's statement which ended the conversation: "The matter of greatest concern to us is Jerusalem. Our envoys in the Middle East view the entire Israel problem as being reflected in that of Jerusalem. We are in touch with the Vatican on this question. I am aware of the various sides' positions. I think it would be worthwhile to meet for some in-depth talks. Perhaps Italy will be able to formulate a position of its own." Halevi deduces from these remarks that the rumours to the effect that Jerusalem will be placed on the agenda of the next Assembly are true. He asks for instructions.[2]

Notes

1. Eliezer Halevy, Counsellor at the Israel Legation in Italy.
2. In reply, Avner referred Halevy to the arguments on the Jerusalem issue to be found in the minister's brief (No. 352). He also sought to clarify the meaning of Tallarigo's statement about the link between the Italian foreign ministry and the Vatican: were the Italians proposing or about to propose a solution to the Jerusalem question, what was the Vatican's position, and did they have any knowledge of the Belgian activity in this matter? (8 October 1951, 130.10/2550/3).

420. C. Herzog (Washington) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 5 October 1951

Coded Tel. WIA 461; Inc.: 130.09/2309/3

Herzog reports to Benjamin Gibli[1] and the Foreign Ministry senior staff on two conversations: the one conducted by himself and Shiloah with General Shoosmith, head of the British military staff in Washington, and that of Shiloah with Greenhill of the British Embassy in Washington.[3] (a) There is a practical Middle East defence plan, although their interlocutors refuse to provide further details. (b) Inclusion of Egypt is a prerequisite for the plan; without it, they believe, the plan is not viable. (c) Negotiations with Egypt have been proceeding since the British Ambassador and Nakhas last met. The tone of the Egyptian press has taken a slight turn for the better; it reports that the main obstacle is Sudan, not the Suez Canal. There is talk of reaching an agreement with Egypt in a matter of weeks. (d) Shoosmith and Greenhill say Israel will have to use discretion in its responses during the coming weeks, because its behaviour is liable to torpedo the plan. In reply to a question, they promised to consult with Israel before making anything public, and would allow it to express its opinion in advance. (e) Shoosmith and Greenhill assert that the plan takes all of Israel's needs and potential into account. (f) Greenhill tried several times to persuade Shiloah that an Anglo-Egyptian agreement would not be to Israel's disadvantage and Israel should not interfere in the two countries' efforts to reach an accord.

Notes

1. Aluf-Mishne Benjamin Gibli, head of I.D.F. intelligence.
2. Thus in original; should read: Shoosmith.
3. The two conversations took place on 2 October. In their reports on the conversations the two participants devoted much space to Shiloah's assessments of the domestic situation in Egypt and of the standing of King Talal in Jordan. Sections (d),

(e), and (f) below are not necessarily implied by the text of the two reports. (Cf. the reports by Greenhill and Shoosmith, 3 October 1951, PRO FO371/91712.)

421. E. E. Palmer to M. Fischer. 6 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 386, n. 1, and No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See No. 396, and Editorial Note, p. 284.
3. The appendix has been omitted here. It appears in No. 405 (appendix).
4. See appendix below.

422. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions in Paris, London, Ankara and New York. 7 October 1951

Coded Tel. MTA55/6; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

Answering Fischer's telegram of 5 October,[1] Eytan instructs him to ask Palmer to explain, in the course of official meetings, why the Arabs refuse to sign a non-aggression pact. Palmer has to be told in no uncertain terms that Israel will agree to no formulation that fails to advance beyond the Armistice Agreements. The Suez affair proves how full of loopholes the Armistice Agreement is. A wording must be agreed upon that explicitly forbids all hostilities, not only those carried out by armed forces. The Commission must be told that the Arabs deliberately phrased their proposals in a manner which would allow them to continue to engage in hostile acts of a non-military nature. Israel will not accede to this, especially in view of the resolution of 1 September,[2] which expressly dismisses the Egyptian claim that it is still in a state of war with Israel. The wording that Israel will agree to sign must clarify that no state of war exists and that any hostile acts, including economic actions, are therefore prohibited. If Fischer stubbornly continues to advance this position, the Commission will be unable to avoid agreeing with him.

Notes

1. Fischer sent a telegram with the substance of his conversation with Palmer on 5 October and the text of the Arab proposal submitted to the Commission on 3 October (see No. 421, appendix). In the conversation with Palmer, Fischer made it clear that Israel's proposal for a non-aggression pact came in answer to the Commission's request and that it contained the "absolute minimum in terms of a declaration of

non-aggressive intentions". Palmer said that Israel's proposal went farther than the Commission had intended, and emphasized that in his opinion the Arabs would not accept it at this stage of the discussions. Fischer stressed Israel's desire for cooperation with the Commission and emphasized that Israel would not alter the contents of its proposal, but would be prepared to listen to other opinions concerning its formulation (5 October 1951, 130.09/2344/8).

2. See Editorial Note, p. 257.

423. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 7 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer believes the Conciliation Commission will issue a statement expressing its satisfaction with the parties' declarations and its intention to begin negotiations on the proposals it has raised.[1] The Arabs may accept the Commission's position and thereby present Israel as intransigent. The delegation began with an information campaign attuned to the possibility of such a development, and prepared a draft reply to the Commission mentioning: (1) everything Israel has done in response to the Commission's demand for a commitment to non-aggression; (2) the Commission's assurances that it would not adopt any formulation that falls short of the Preamble to the Commission's proposals; (3) the Commission's confirmation that the Israeli proposal is in line with the Preamble of the Commission's proposal, and the Commission's promise to present the Arabs with the proposed draft of the Israeli non-aggression pact and to present Israel with Arab proposals; (4) Israel's astonishment at the acceptance of the Arabs' wording, which in no way matched the content or spirit of the requisite commitment; (5) that the Commission had waived its demand; (6) that neither Israel nor a U.N. agency can assume that the Arabs' text expresses either an undertaking by Arab countries as U.N. members or their wish for peace; (7) an analysis of the Arabs' response, with emphasis on the fact that it lacks three important points in the Preamble: an undertaking by the Arab countries as members of the U.N., a commitment to solve disputes by peaceful means, and omission of the term "hostile actions" in favour of the term "armed force", thus making clear the Egyptian interpretation of the Armistice Agreement; (8) the Arabs' hostile policy, as evinced by their interpretation of the Armistice Agreements in contradiction to their commitments as members of the U.N. The draft reply ends by stressing the following points: (a) Neither a U.N. agency nor Israel can accept a declaration that constitutes a retreat from the Armistice Agreements and undermines the Armistice system. (b) The Arabs' refusal to sign the required declaration attests to their intention to continue with their

hostile acts. (c) Israel asks the Commission to continue its efforts to obtain a satisfactory declaration from the Arabs, and demands that the Arabs explain why they find the Israeli proposal unacceptable.

Fischer recommends that the reply be sent within the next few days and used for information purposes.[2]

Notes

1. Cf. No. 421. The Commission's letter reached Fischer on 7 October, after he had dispatched the present telegram (Fischer's telegram to Eytan, 7 October 1951, 130.09/2344/8).
2. In reply Eytan, following the Prime Minister's directive, instructed Fischer to wait until the Government session that would discuss the situation at the Paris Conference and not to have contact with the Commission or with the press until he received further instructions. Fischer was requested to refrain from private conversations with members of the Commission and from informing the press that he was awaiting instructions from the Government (Eytan's telegram to Fischer, 8 October 1951, 130.09/2344/5). See Ben-Gurion's instructions, No. 425, and cf. Fischer's reply to the Commission, No. 428.

424. A. Kubovy (Warsaw) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 9 October 1951

Coded Tel. BI369; Inc.: 130.09/2306/4

Kubovy reports on a cordial 90-minute conversation with Wierblowski, Polish deputy and acting foreign minister, on the issue of *aliya*. Wierblowski said that (a) emigration from Poland is an internal Polish matter, and the Israeli envoy is the only foreign representative with whom the Polish government is willing to discuss it; (b) Barzilai has been expressly informed that the emigration operation is finished; (c) the resumption of mass emigration would be detrimental to Poland's stability; (d) Wierblowski himself favours family unification, but the degree of kinship has to be checked; (e) the matter should indeed be handled as individual cases, but with greater speed and without footdragging; (f) the Foreign Ministry is not the only agency dealing with the matter; Kubovy is free to meet with others, too; (g) while not mentioning them by name, he hints that one is the Ministry of the Interior; (h) he promises to ascertain whether Skrzeszewski has already presented these agencies with his conclusions and to append his own remarks; (i) he admits that his government wants to secure sympathy not only from Israel but from the entire Jewish world; (j) he estimates the number of appeals at 5,000 rather than the 12,000–15,000 claimed by Israel's representatives.

At the beginning of the talk, Kubovy expressed his astonishment about press and radio depictions of Israel as an American vassal. Skrzeszewski replied that: (a) When Poland had made similar complaints the reply had been that Israel practises freedom of speech; the same holds true for Poland; (b) his government is following with concern Israel's growing inclination to align itself with the United States; (c) media attacks upon Israel are few, and his government's attitude towards Israel is positive.

All in all, Kubovy grades the conversation as "good" and finds indications auguring further improvement on the issue of emigration.

Notes

1. Yosef Leron, Counsellor at the Israel Legation in Warsaw.
2. The talks took place on 11 October. Sluczański showed the Israeli representatives a letter from Tel Aviv with 50 signatures of immigrants who wished to return to Poland. He tried to convince them that he was not opposed to family reunification, but since his influence was nil he could not help. He advised the Israeli representatives not to make contact with persons outside the Polish Foreign Ministry. He hinted that the matter of *aliya* depended on the foreign-affairs division of the Ministry of Defence and that some progress could be hoped for. (See Kubovy's telegram to the Foreign Ministry, 12 October 1951, 130.09/2306/4.)

425. W. Eytan to the Israel Legation in Paris.[1] 13 October 1951

Notes

1. Also sent to New York, London, and Ankara.
2. See No. 423 and n. 2 *ibid.*
3. See No. 421.
4. See No. 423.

426. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions Abroad. 13 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 399, n. 2.
2. The full text of the memoranda and the oral communiqués is filed under 130.02/2445/10.
3. See No. 434.

427. M. Sharett (Washington) to W. Eytan. 13 October 1951

Coded Tel. WIA486; Outg.: 93.01/2207/22

Sharett informs Ben-Gurion and Kaplan that he and the Embassy staff had only recently been informed that Israel was on the brink of financial disaster. The news struck him like a thunderbolt; Horowitz had told him before leaving that financial affairs had been arranged through the end of October. The very fact that such crises could take him and his colleagues at the Embassy by surprise, he added, deserves investigation on its own account; for the moment, however, he and his associates have taken immediate action to mobilize influential persons in Washington to alleviate the crisis. McGhee promised Eban and Sharett to inform the bankers who would approach him that the grant-in-aid programme could be considered "in the pipeline" and Israel could expect substantial allocations in the near future.[1] Symington,[2] a man of great influence in banking circles, agreed to provide the same information, at his own initiative, to any bank to which Israel applied for a loan. Basing himself on his talks with the officials responsible for implementing the grant-in-aid, Sharett hopes for some relief by the end of November.

Notes

1. See No. 431 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. William Stuart Symington, from May 1951 administrator of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (a financial aid institution set up by President Roosevelt during the Great Depression).
3. William McChesney Martin, U.S. executive director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; Assistant U.S. Secretary of the Treasury; from April 1951, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.
4. Untraced.
5. See Kollek's telegram to Kaplan, W491, 15 October 1951, 93.01/2207/22.

428. M. Fischer to E. E. Palmer. 14 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 421.
2. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. See Editorial Note, p. 284, and No. 396.
4. See No. 405 and appendix *ibid.*

5. See No. 412.
6. See No. 422, n. 1.
7. The Arab proposal, which appears in No. 421 (appendix), has been omitted here.
8. Paragraphs 1 and 6 of the resolution cited in the letter have been omitted here. They appear in the Editorial Note, p. 257.

429. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions Abroad. 14 October 1951

Note

1. See No. 426.

430. A. Biran (Jerusalem) to W. Eytan. 14 October 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2408/13

Biran reports on a conversation with 'Azmi Nashashibi, the director-general of the Jordanian Foreign Ministry: (a) *Conciliation Commission* — Nashashibi explains that the League's political committee has adopted resolutions against the Commission's proposals. These resolutions had been forwarded to the Arab governments, and it was their responsibility to instruct their delegations in Paris how to act. The Jordanian government has not yet discussed the matter. He does not believe that directives different in spirit from the League's resolutions will be issued. He thinks the Commission will solve nothing, and adds that it was doomed to failure from the day it was set up. In answer to Biran's question as to what lay behind the League's decision, Nashashibi said the Commission's proposals had the undertones of a settlement, and the Arab countries were not yet prepared to recognize Israel's existence. When Biran asked whether the Arabs still wished to throw Israel into the sea, Nashashibi replied in the negative but added that they sought to reduce its territory. (b) *Jerusalem*—The Jordanians have not yet abolished the position of Custodian of the Holy Places within the Prime Minister's Bureau. Khalidi[1] continues in his post. He has to preserve the *status quo* so as to ensure that accepted practice is not modified. Nashashibi denies any intention of declaring Talal "King of Jerusalem". He became King of Jordan and Jerusalem the moment he appeared before the House of Representatives, and there is no need for a special ceremony in Jerusalem. Nashashibi thinks that the Commission will put forward proposals on Jerusalem and that the Assembly will debate the issue. He replied evasively to Biran's comment about the plans of the French and other countries to internationalize

Jerusalem. It is Biran's impression that Nashashibi will heartily welcome any internationalization proposal and will throw his weight behind such a plan. Biran is also sure that Jordan will not break ranks with the Arab countries if they decide to support internationalization, and will not act as it did in last year's Assembly. Nashashibi says that East Jerusalem is developing nicely and that much construction is under way. Even if the Arabs fear an Israeli conquest, they will not flee this time as in the last war, and therefore have no apprehensions about building and developing the area. As for easing border crossings during religious festivals, Nashashibi states that the *status quo* will be preserved. (c) *King Talal*—Nashashibi insists that Talal is completely healthy. A polite and courteous man, wise in his exercise of rule, Talal is a very democratic king who wants a constitutional monarchy. Biran then inquired about Talal's relations with the Arab countries and the truth of the rumour of his pro-Egypt leanings; Nashashibi's answer was neither clear nor to the point. (d) *Glubb Pasha*—Nashashibi dispels the rumours about Glubb's retirement. (e) *Israel-Arab peace*—Nashashibi sees no chance of peace. The Arabs demand the return of refugees and full compensation; Israel is opposed. He admits that the demand for return of the refugees is excessive and that some have already settled down and re-established their lives elsewhere, but the demand stands nevertheless. (f) *Armistice Commission*—Nashashibi's opinion on this issue is rather confused. On the one hand, he emphasizes that the Commission deals only with border issues and incidents arising from the Armistice Agreement; on the other hand, he explains Touqan's appointment as an indication of the Commission's political importance.

Notes

1. Husain Fakhri Al-Khalidi, from June 1951 Jordanian Custodian of the Holy Places in Jerusalem.
2. Abdallah Rimawi, member of the Jordanian House of Representatives.
3. The material has been omitted here.

431. A. Eban to W. Eytan. 15 October 1951

Notes

1. 12 October 1951.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 257.
3. See No. 426.
4. See No. 427.

432. A. Eban (Washington) to D. Ben-Gurion. 15 October 1951

Coded Tel. WIA490; Outg.: 93.01/2207/22

Eban shares some of his thoughts on Egypt: (1) The fact that the West approached Egypt concerning the Middle East Command indicates not that they favour Egypt over Israel but that there is no substitute for the Suez Canal and the bases in Egypt. The Western approach focuses on a particular region, not necessarily on the Egyptian people or army. (2) McGhee and Davis announced that Israel, too, will be approached[1]; this is sincere and well-founded, since the defence of the Canal cannot be planned without taking account of the area bordering it on the north. (3) Egypt's response is not yet known. If it rejects the application and backs its refusal with incitement against the Western armies, Egypt will incur Western displeasure, and a school of thought will emerge which will favour regional defence planning based on agreements with Turkey, Israel, and Great Britain. If Egypt responds affirmatively, its influence in the West will undoubtedly grow. This will be detrimental to Israel, notwithstanding the efforts of Davis and McGhee to calm the waters. (4) Eban believes Israel has to exercise its right of passage through the Canal. In the first stage, the British should be persuaded to send an oil tanker to Haifa; if they refuse, a ship flying Israeli colours should be sent instead. By pursuing an active policy of implementing the right of passage through the Canal on the basis of the resolution of 1 September,[2] Israel will show that there will be no stable arrangements in the area as long as its existence and rights are disregarded.

Notes

1. See Nos. 426 and 431.
2. See Editorial Note, p. 257.

433. A. Eban (Washington) to M. Sharett. 15 October 1951

Tel.[1]; Outg.: 93.01/2207/22

Eban suggests an information campaign in the United States on the issue of Egypt. Its major planks: (1) description of the background of present Egyptian positions on aggression in the Middle East and the

world. It was Egypt that touched off the conflagration in Palestine and continues to keep the embers glowing. Thus Egypt, more than any other country, is responsible for the refugee problem and other unresolved issues. As for Korea, Egypt has displayed absolute disregard for the basic principles of the U.N. Charter and is one of the few countries that remain unmoved by aggression in the Far East. (2) Egypt is exploiting its authority in the Arab world to repress and nullify any Arab tendency to reach a settlement with Israel. With its conduct on the Suez Canal issue, it abuses the authority of the U.N. and the rights of the countries that intend to integrate Egypt into the regional defence system. (3) The evidence of World War II and the War of Independence proves neither that the Egyptian army is efficient nor that the Egyptians are willing to offer their lives for any particular moral or international principle. (4) Israel does not insist upon rigid adherence to pacts and agreements drawn up in the past that need to be amended or replaced. However, Egypt's belief that it has the right to annul its commitments unilaterally causes concern among all nations that have treaties or agreements with it, and does not augur well for the new arrangement that the Western powers are planning. (5) In approaching Egypt, the Western countries must demand that Egypt sign a non-aggression pact with Israel and rescind all remaining manifestations of the Suez blockade. Otherwise, the practical efficacy of the proposed plan will be undermined.

Eban suggests that these arguments be presented to the press and political leaders, but not directly by Israel's representatives.

Note

1. The telegram was passed on to Sharett by a messenger.

434. Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion–M. B. Davis (Tel Aviv, 15 October 1951)

Notes

1. Recorded by Michael Comay.
2. See No. 426.
3. Cf. report of the conversation in Ben-Gurion's diary, 15 October 1951, IMDEA.
4. The appendices have been omitted here.
5. See No. 426 and n. 2 *ibid.*

435. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions in New York and Paris. 16 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 425.
2. See No. 421, and n. 3 *ibid.*
3. See No. 428.

436. M. Sharett to W. Eytan. 16 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 431.
2. See No. 399, n. 2.
3. See Editorial Note, p. 257.

437. Y. Shimoni (Tel Aviv) to W. Eytan. 16 October 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2415/31

Shimoni presents a plan for establishing ties between Israel and Asia: (1) The basic assumption is that it is important to foster relations with Asian countries. Their importance is also borne out by the fact that the Arabs are stepping up their efforts to align the Asian countries, especially the Muslim ones, with Israel's enemies. Shimoni assumes that the economic, political, and international importance of these countries will continue to grow in the decades to come, and that the decline of Western influence in Asia is likely to continue. (2) Time is of the essence in fostering ties with Asia. Israel has to pre-empt the Arabs by establishing legations in those countries east of India (Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, China, and Japan) where they do not exist as yet. (3) Within the whole framework of relations, economic and trade ties are among the most important. Most of these countries can serve as markets for Israeli exports. Shimoni suggests having the Economic Division draw up a detailed programme along these lines. (4) Fostering ties is dependent upon Israeli initiative and willingness, for the present, to appoint representatives without demanding complete reciprocity. It should be understood that relations with India, Japan, Thailand, and Burma are more important for Israel than for any of these countries. One must establish legations to foster ties, and Israel cannot expect the Jews in those locales to be of much help. (5) Normal relations with Pakistan and Afghanistan are out of the

question at present, since these countries have not yet recognized Israel. As for Indonesia, there have been friendly exchanges, but Indonesia does not seem inclined to accept official Israeli representation. Indonesia rejected Israel's proposal to dispatch a trade and good-will delegation. There is reason to hope that if an Israeli representation is established in Southeast Asia, it will eventually succeed in overcoming Indonesia's refusal. At this juncture, however, there is no point in even thinking about setting up a representation there. Ceylon has not accorded Israel full recognition, but the fact that official telegrams have been exchanged may point to *de facto* recognition. Officially, the Ceylon government has not acknowledged even this level of recognition. Shimoni suggests passing up Ceylon for the moment. (6) India, Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, and China have recognized Israel *de jure*. In the case of Japan, the matter has not yet been raised formally. Presumably, however, there is no obstacle to fostering normal ties with this country. (7) India declared that it cannot send an envoy to Israel at present, citing *inter alia* its financial situation and the lack of a suitable diplomatic administration. Although there is much truth to this claim, it would be naive to blame financial considerations alone. Political factors are undoubtedly at work, too, first among them a reluctance to antagonize India's 35 million Muslims, the Arab world, and, in particular, the inhabitants of Kashmir. Nehru, too, is personally suspicious of Israel's role as "the West's spearhead in the East". It is therefore clear that India will not open a legation in Israel. Still, it may be presumed that India will not refuse to accept an Israeli envoy provided Israel does not insist on reciprocity. The Indian government agreed without reservations to the appointment of an Israeli trade representative in Bombay, even acceding unhesitatingly to Israel's request to extend his competence to consular affairs. Shimoni therefore suggests that Israel establish a legation in New Delhi at once. (8) There is no reason to believe that the governments of Burma, Thailand, and the Philippines would refuse to accept Israeli envoys provided Israel does not demand immediate reciprocity. Shimoni suggests a joint representation for these three countries and authorizing the delegation to be sent to that region to negotiate the establishment of the legation. (9) As for Japan, Israel should take the initiative and suggest an exchange of representatives; again Shimoni recommends flexibility, to the extent of leaving open the possibility of sending an envoy with no demand for immediate reciprocity. (10) Shimoni re-emphasizes the importance of fostering relations with China. Israel is the first and only country in the Middle East to have broken off relations with the Chiang Kai-Shek regime and to have recognized the People's Republic of China. In view of the Korean War, Israel cannot expect to be able to establish a representation in China, but it is worth adopting a policy in favour of doing so as soon as the international situation permits.

438. A. Eban (Washington) to W. Eytan. 17 October 1951

Coded Tel. WIA505; Outg.: 93.01/2207/22

Eban replies to Dov Joseph[1] with reference to Telegram 87:[2] (1) The era of welfare surplus food shipments is over. It was a temporary phenomenon, never to recur, from which Israel had benefitted more than any other country. (2) Small quantities of certain commodities, such as egg powder and pulses, are still available at greatly reduced prices. Because of their special relations with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and its Secretary, the embassy staff learns of these special opportunities early on. With its cash problems, however, Israel is unable to buy at the cheap stage and usually ends up paying the full price. A special fund to be used on such occasions could save Israel a lot of money, but Eban fears that the critical financial situation precludes this logical step. (3) There is already a draft agreement, prepared in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, for a shipment of 40 tons of wheat or fodder to Israel as the property of the United States government, on favourable credit terms. This calls for a modification of the terms of collateral required of Israel thus far, and Eban is trying to persuade Brannan to agree to this change. If approved, it might be possible to obtain successive agreements along similar lines, building up a modest stockpile.

Notes

1. Dov Joseph, Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Justice.
2. In light of the serious financial crisis, Dov Joseph proposed that Sharett approach the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and request renewed consignments of American surplus food, similar to the consignments that Israel had received in 1950. He also proposed resuming the negotiations that had begun in early 1951 concerning the stockpiling of wheat and other grains in Israel at the expense of the U.S. government (16 October 1951, 93.03/2203/14).

439. M. Fischer (Paris) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 17 October 1951

Coded Tel. FA1; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer reports to Eytan and Sharett on developments at the Paris Conference. (1) The Arab delegations have not received any new instructions, and rumours that the Arab League has adopted an official resolution are unconfirmed. The delegations are pursuing their previous policies. Each delegation sent a letter affirming the Commission's

position; the Israeli delegation had not seen the text of these letters. (2) The Arab delegations think Jerusalem will be discussed in the Assembly. Although Jordan has not yet determined its position, nationalist, economic, and Christian circles in Jordan are inclined to align themselves as far as possible with the Arab-Egyptian stand. (3) The Commission members met in Fischer's house on 16 October after receiving Israel's reply.[1] Marshall confirmed that the State Department shows a lack of interest in the conference. The Commission has lost all hope of achieving results; all it wants is to be able, following the talks between the disputants, to provide the Assembly with a clear picture of their positions on all issues. (4) Marshall praises Israel's response and suggests giving it publicity in reaction to the publication of Palmer's letter.[2] Azcárate, unlike Marshall, is highly disappointed with Israel's reply. Palmer had nothing to say about the publication of his letter.

Notes

1. See No. 428.
2. See No. 421.
3. Thus in original.

440. E. E. Palmer to M. Fischer. 18 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 428.
2. See No. 421.
3. See No. 450 and n. 1 *ibid.*

441. A. Eban to W. Eytan. 18 October 1951

Note

1. See No. 426.

442. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions Abroad. 19 October 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2413/32

Eytan discusses relations with Japan's diplomatic representations

worldwide in view of the peace treaty signed on 8 September 1951 between Japan and the 49 countries that had been at war with her. The treaty removes all military, economic or political restrictions from Japan, including those pertaining to diplomatic representation abroad. Japan can be expected to establish legations in many countries in the near future. Israel's diplomats should treat the Japanese representatives normally and amicably, following standard diplomatic procedure. Similarly to Israel's relationship with Italy, Japan should not be reminded of its Fascist and imperialist past. There is no reason to refrain from establishing friendly relations with Japanese diplomatic representatives, although the impression that Israel is especially desirous of Japan's friendship should be avoided. If the question of reciprocal exchange of diplomatic legations comes up, the answer must be that there is no obstacle or fundamental opposition to such a step. Israel's lack of initiative in this matter should be attributed to practical and financial factors. It should also be noted that the Japanese government, as the party intent on re-establishing international ties, should approach Israel first, something it has so far failed to do.

443. W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) to the Israel Missions in Ankara, Paris, and Washington. 19 October 1951

Coded Tel. P33; Outg.: 130.09/2377/1

In view of recent developments, Eytan offers further reasons for Israel's insistence that the Conciliation Commission attempt to elicit a general Arab commitment along the lines of a non-aggression declaration. (1) The West's Middle East defence plan implies an interest in intra-regional peace. The demand for non-aggression is the logical complement of the West's intention to set up a regional command. The Commission should press for progress towards this goal, in support of the Western powers. (2) Egypt's rejection of the Western proposal is linked to its conflict with Britain. The United States, however, is entitled to ask Egypt to move towards ending the regional conflict and to refrain from impeding, by keeping the conflict alive, the West's effort to organize regional defence. (3) If Egypt joins the regional command and receives military aid, a non-aggression pact will be even more vital to Israel. (4) The Arab leaders' state of mind, as reflected in their extremist behaviour towards the West, lends weight to Israel's demand for a general commitment before discussing the Conciliation Commission's proposals.

444. E. Elath to M. Comay. 19 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 426.
2. In the original erroneously: remove.

445. M. Fischer to E. E. Palmer. 19 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 440.
2. See No. 428.

446. S. Divon (Paris) to W. Eytan. 20 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Divon reports on a conversation with an Egyptian friend employed in the Egyptian embassy in Paris. The topic was Egypt's concern about Israel's position on the Anglo-Egyptian conflict. The Egyptian believes his country and Israel must sign a non-aggression pact. If Israel wishes to make a statement or present a proposal to Egypt, he is willing to go to Cairo forthwith and speak with the Egyptian Foreign Minister, who trusts him. Divon thinks it worth considering how to take advantage of the situation in Egypt. Divon also arranged for telephone communications with Fuad Sarraj al-Din's people in Cairo, in case of need.

Note

1. The friend's name and his function have been omitted here.

447. M. Fischer to G. Avner. 21 October 1951

448. W. Eytan to the Israel Legation in Paris. 21 October 1951

Note

1. See No. 386 n. 1, and No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*

449. M. Fischer to W. Eytan. 21 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. See No. 214.

450. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 23 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.02/2447/1

Fischer reports on the Paris Conference: (1) Palmer informed him of the State Department's position,[1] adding, in reply to Fischer's complaints, that if Israel agreed to accept the detailed explanations of the proposal, he would be prepared to accept Israel's refusal to negotiate with the Arabs pending their agreement to a suitable non-aggression formula. (2) The Commission members pressed Fischer to agree to meet them after a session at which they would present the Arabs with the explanations. It has been learned that the Commission will first hear Israel's arguments on non-aggression without replying, and will then explain their proposals to the Israelis. (3) Israel has two options: (a) to refuse to accept the explanations, i.e., to torpedo the conference over the non-aggression issue and to take the blame for this; or (b) to find a way of preserving sound relations with the Commission. To do this, Israel will have to accept the proposals with their attendant dangers. Under such circumstances, Israel may: (1) issue an immediate communiqué to the effect that Israel refuses to discuss any issue concerning Israel-Arab relations as long as the Arab countries refuse to recognize their obligations towards Israel on the basis of the Armistice Agreements, Security Council resolutions and the United Nations Charter. On these terms, Israel could declare at a later date that compensation and, perhaps, the blocked assets were the only possible topics of discussion; or (2) state immediately that Israel will agree to discuss compensation only, being unwilling to deliberate issues pertaining to Israel-Arab relations.

Notes

1. Palmer informed Fischer, on behalf of the State Department, that Israel's attitude on the non-aggression issue was "hasty and ill-advised". He urged Israel to withdraw its opposition to the Commission's proposal and warned that it would be blamed for the Commission's failure (telegram from Fischer to the Foreign Ministry, F4, 22 October 1951, 130.09/2344/8).
2. See No. 452.

451. A. Eban to M. Sharett. 23 October 1951

Notes

1. See the State Department's guidelines in advance of the conversation and cf. the report on it in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 915–18.
2. See No. 421.
3. See No. 450 and n. 1 *ibid.*
4. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
5. Thus in original; should be: DPA.

452. C. Herzog (Washington) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 23 October 1951

Coded Tel. WIA533; Outg.: 93.01/2207/22

Herzog reports to Gibli and the United States Division on a conversation with Lewis Jones attended by Eban and himself. Jones declared that the United States objected to Faïd as the location of the Middle East Command, and had suggested Cyprus as a suitable alternative out of consideration for Israel. Several Arab countries are annoyed with Egypt for refusing to join the Middle East Command. The next step is to issue a formal announcement about the establishment of the Command and to invite any interested country to join. Free military aid would depend on each country's response to the Command. Jones advises Israel to refrain from bringing up the Suez shipping issue until tempers cool, but agrees that it has to be discussed in the near future.

453. D. Horowitz to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 24 October 1951

Notes

1. Sir Leslie Rowan, economic minister at the British Embassy in Washington; subsequently Second Secretary, British Treasury.

2. On 25 October general elections were held in Britain; the Conservative Party won the elections and Winston Churchill formed the new government.

Editorial Note

Conference of Jewish Organizations on German Reparations

On 25–26 October, a conference was held in New York, attended by representatives of Jewish organizations in the United States, Britain, France and Argentina, to discuss the Jewish people's claims on Germany. The conference was convened at the initiative of the Jewish Agency and the Foreign Ministry. The following issues were discussed, *inter alia*: (1) what claims should be made of the Germans; (2) whether direct talks should be held with the Germans and who would be chosen to represent the Jewish people; (3) what would be included in the Israeli claim and in the other claims.

All agreed that the Israeli claim had priority over other claims and that any action should be fully coordinated between the representative of the government of Israel and the representatives of the Jewish organizations. The conference did not adopt any decisions, since some of the representatives argued that they were not authorized to make decisions on behalf of their organizations. The conference appointed two committees: a political committee, which included representatives of each of the organizations that participated in the conference, and a smaller executive committee, whose members included Blaustein, Goldmann, Barou, and Eban. The following communiqué was published at the end of the conference:

"This Conference was convened for the sole purpose of considering Jewish material claims against Germany.

"The Conference, recalling the appalling martyrdom and losses suffered by Jews at the hands of Nazi Germany, declares that crimes of the nature and magnitude perpetrated by Nazi Germany against Jews cannot be expiated by any measure of material reparations. No indemnity, however large, can make good the destruction of human life and cultural values or atone for the agony of the men, women and children tortured or put to death by every inhuman device.

"Every elementary principle of justice and human decency requires that the German people shall, at the least, restore plundered Jewish property, indemnify the victims of persecution, their heirs and successors, and pay for the rehabilitation of the survivors. In this connection the Conference recalls the note of the Government of Israel presented to the Occupying Powers on March 12, 1951.

"The significance of the statement made by the Chancellor of the German Federal Government on September 27, 1951, and approved

by the West German Parliament, acknowledging that the unspeakable crimes committed during the Nazi regime impose on the German people the obligation to make amends, will be judged by the speed and extent of its implementation.

"The Conference notes that no acknowledgement of responsibility or readiness to make any amends has been made by Eastern Germany.

"The Conference:

"1. Records its wholehearted support of the claim advanced by the Government of Israel in respect of the rehabilitation in Israel of victims of Nazi persecution.

"2. Demands satisfaction of all other Jewish claims against Germany, including claims for restitution and indemnification by individuals, successor organizations and others, and for rehabilitation of the Jewish victims of Nazi persecution.

"3. Calls for immediate steps to improve existing restitution and indemnification legislation and procedure, to enact such legislation where it does not exist, and to speed up the settlement of Jewish claims in these fields."

(See report on the conference by E. Herlitz, 1 November 1951, 130.10/2543/7; Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 396, 13 November 1951, 130.02/2417/3.)

454. Statement Made by the Chairman of the Conciliation Commission to the Israel Delegation at the Paris Conference. 26 October 1951

Notes

1. The document is taken from Information to Israel Missions Abroad, No. 386, 31 October 1951. Palmer handed over the communiqué after Fischer read out the Israeli government's declaration on its position concerning non-aggression and expressing its willingness to discuss with the Commission all outstanding issues between Israel and the U.N. (The text of the declaration is filed under 130.10/2550/1.) Palmer replied that the Commission would discuss the Israeli communiqué (Fischer's telegram to Eytan, 26 October 1951, 130.09/2344/8).
2. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. See Volume 5, appendix B.

455. W. Eytan to the Israel Missions Abroad. 28 October 1951

Note

1. The Three-Power documents are filed under 130.02/2445/12; the Turkish document is filed under 130.15/2566/17.

456. G. Avner (Tel Aviv) to M. Ishai (Rome). 28 October 1951

Draft Tel.;[1] Outg.: 93.20/220/17

Avner cables instructions to Ishai for his forthcoming talk with the Italian Prime Minister.[2] He should inform the Prime Minister that Italian-Israeli relations must be strengthened, now that the Middle East is being integrated into Western defence plans.[3] The new defence arrangements under way intensify the two countries' mutual relationship. Israel wishes to find new ways of strengthening ties with Italy. Israel is aware of Italy's interests in Arab countries, but there is no contradiction between these and closer relations with Israel, as shown by the experience of various countries during the past two years. The Arabs have not rewarded those countries that refrained from establishing ties with Israel on their account. Great Britain, for example, after arguing all along that the problem is which side to prefer, entangled itself in a web of promises and betrayal terminating in utter failure. Israel is a reality, and Israel wishes to be a part of the regional defence framework. Countries neighbouring on the Middle East and interested in ties with the region must learn from past mistakes and current realities. They should proffer friendship to both sides and use this amity to influence the more intransigent side to adopt a positive attitude. Israel's proposals for strengthening ties are: (1) preliminary negotiations towards a treaty of friendship, trade and navigation; (2) exploring the possibility of reciprocal visits by parliamentary delegations; (3) exchange of press delegations; (4) exchange of cultural and scientific lecturers; (5) review of all practical problems between Israel and Italy with intent to resolve them; (6) exploring the possibility of bringing Italian experts and technicians to Israel. Avner suggests that Ishai hint at the existence of a proposal for Israel's Foreign Minister to visit Rome for discussion of all these issues.

Notes

1. Dispatch of the telegram was delayed because of the heavy workload in the Code and Communications Division. It was sent by diplomatic pouch attached to Avner's letter to Ishai, 30 October 1951, 93.20/220/17.
2. See No. 471 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. The assessments, conclusions, and guidelines mentioned below were formulated in a consultation that took place at that time in the Foreign Ministry, with the participation of W. Eytan, G. Avner, S. Rosenne, and others. In the consultations it was decided to sound out the Italian minister in Israel. Eytan and Avner met him and were disappointed by his cold response and his passive attitude towards the Israeli *démarche*. The minister stressed Italian interests in the Arab countries and said that there was a need to tread carefully in this issue. (See Avner to Ishai, 30 October 1951, 93.20/220/17.)
4. See No. 504.

457. A. Eban to M. Sharett. 29 October 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 317–18.
2. See Sharett's answer in a telegram to Eban, TNW82, 1 November 1951, 93/01/2207/32.

458. M. Fischer (Paris) to W. Eytan. 30 October 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2344/8

Fischer reports on Barco's talk with Najar and Divon. (1) The Commission understands the position Israel took in the latest meeting.[1] (2) The Commission is in a quandary and does not know how to proceed. (3) Barco does not expect the Arabs to view the Commission's proposals favourably. The Commission has no hope of inducing the Israelis and Arabs to reach even a partial agreement. (4) Barco did not raise the issue of Israel's reaction to the Commission's explanations of its proposals.[2] (5) Barco is considering terminating the current stage of the conference, but is not sure how to do this. (6) Barco said that however important the refugee problem is, negotiations on the issue might cause the Arabs to present political difficulties and would raise the thorny problem of how to raise the requisite funds. He fears that unsuccessful negotiations would be more damaging than no negotiations. (7) The Middle East situation was also discussed.

Note

1. See No. 454 and n. 1 *ibid.*

459. E. Elath to M. Comay. 30 October 1951

Note

1. Cf. No. 455.

Editorial Note

Transmission of the Note from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States

On 30 October, on the eve of Byroade's departure for the London conference on settling German debts, Eban handed him the following note. In response, Byroade said that the conference would focus on the issue of debts, but in light of the contractual nature of the Israeli claims the representatives of the Powers would consider inviting an Israeli representative. Byroade added that in his presentation to the conference, the Israeli representative would have to refrain from any deviation from its limited agenda. He was of the opinion that Adenauer was not in any haste to deal with the reparations issue, as had originally seemed to be the case, because he was busy solving Germany's complex problems. (See Herlitz's telegram to the U.S. Division, 30 October 1951, 93.01/2207/22.) A similar note was also handed over in London and Paris.

460. Note from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 30 October 1951

Notes

1. See No. 242.
2. *Ibid.*, n. 5.
3. See answer to letter in No. 499.

461. E. Herlitz to the United States Division. [30 October 1951]

462. E. E. Palmer to M. Fischer. 31 October 1951

Notes

1. Cf. Eban's telegram to Fischer, WPT2, 31 October 1951, 93.01/2207/22. Eban said that during the conversation about the forthcoming session of the General Assembly Hickerson had raised the question of the stalemate at the Paris conference. He accepted Israel's attitude on the question of the non-aggression pact, but from tactical considerations advised it to adopt a policy that would not summarily exclude any topic among the five items the Commission had proposed for discussion. (See No. 454 and n. 1 *ibid.* See also letter from Fischer to Eytan, 1 November 1951, 130.02/2441/5.)
2. See Editorial Note, p. 284.
3. See No. 421.
4. See No. 454.

463. T. Kollek to the United States Division. 1 November 1951

464. A. Eban (Washington) to C. Herzog (Washington). 1 November 1951

Copy: 130.02/2455/1

Eban presents his position concerning U.S. military aid and asks Herzog to present his views when the matter is discussed in Israel. He believes that the U.S. had made an extremely significant contribution during the past years towards strengthening Israel and its economy, both through the loan from the Export-Import Bank and through approval of the economic grant-in-aid. This was in contrast to the Arab world's attempts to strangle the State of Israel through an economic siege. Eban is of the opinion that American policy, despite all its defects and shortcomings, stood up to the basic tendency of the Arab world and helped Israel keep its head above water and balance its economy. He disagrees with a certain school of thought prevailing in Israel that fears that the United States is following the example of Britain in the period preceding the White Paper. Britain had attempted to weaken the Jewish Agency and restrict immigration to Palestine, whereas the United States had proved in the past year that it supported Israel and was helping it achieve economic viability. The balance of American policy towards Israel as compared with that towards the Arab world is, Eban believes, in Israel's favour. The

United States has not demanded anything of Israel in exchange for the assistance it provided, but it is commonly believed in the United States that Israel will be an asset to America in creating the Western defence system in the Middle East. Eban holds the opinion that the moment of truth has arrived; Israel must fulfill the promises made by its representatives that Israel would cooperate in achieving American defence objectives in the Middle East. If, when the time comes, it turns out that Israel intends to benefit from American assistance while washing its hands of any concern for basic American interests in the Middle East, a serious crisis would arise in Israel-U.S. relations. Such a crisis could damage Israel's primary objective of absorbing immigration. Eban believes that Israel's participation in the Middle East defence system should be considered in light of a commitment that has already been created *de facto* between Israel and the United States through Israel's need for American assistance. Eban's conclusion is that Israel has no choice but to cooperate with the United States and to accept the military aid offered to it. Eban foresees two possible Arab reactions to the regional defence program. Either the Arabs will accept the Western plan, in which case Israel must not stand idly by and allow the United States to consider the Arabs their bulwark, or they will follow Egypt, in which case new possibilities of *rapprochement* with the United States will be opened for Israel, providing momentum for the solution of Israel's economic and financial problems. At the end of the letter, Eban presents his recommendations: (1) The government must adopt a decision in principle that Israel views with favour the United States' intention to provide for the defence of the region, and that Israel will help the United States in this objective to the best of its ability and in accordance with its particular conditions and needs. Israel's main demand of the Western powers is full and unrestricted recognition of all of Israel's current borders, and that they refrain from pressuring Israel for concessions on the refugee question. It must be made clear that the fulfillment of this request will accelerate the achievement of peace in the region. (2) Criticism must continue unabated of the Four Power plan to include Egypt in the regional command without demanding that it and the other Arab countries radically alter their attitude toward the State of Israel. The regional command plan should not be rejected out of hand. (3) The U.S. government should be approached with a request for military aid in the context of a mutual defence plan. Even if the United States does not agree to this request, Israel could not be charged with indifference toward world defence needs. In substantiating this claim, there is no need to portray the Soviet Union as a potential or actual enemy. It suffices to point out the sensitive security position of the State of Israel in the region and in the world, as a result of its unique political and geographic situation. (4) The United States should be approached with an explicit request for military aid for the coming

year in order to ease the large budgetary burden placed on Israel because of security needs. If the United States shares in the burden of immigrant absorption, it can also help in strengthening Israeli security, for there is no fundamental difference between the two. (5) In the proposals for military aid, emphasis should be placed on those projects that Israel is unable to undertake by itself because of their financial burden, such as the expansion of port facilities, the establishment of drydocks, airports, etc. These plans should be given preference over arms acquisitions, with which Israel is more or less coping.

465. M. Fischer to W. Eytan. 2 November 1951

Notes

1. See Nos. 387 and 454.
2. See No. 462.

466. A. Eban to M. Sharett. 2 November 1951

Editorial Note

Statement by the Foreign Minister and the Knesset Debate on Israel's Foreign Policy

On 4 November Sharett presented a statement to the Knesset, on behalf of the Government, concerning Israel's foreign policy. During that day and the following one the Knesset debated the statement. Sharett reviewed the main issues on Israel's foreign policy agenda at the time. He reported on the approval of the American grant-in-aid ($64 million) and the steps that were being taken to implement it; on developments concerning German reparations; on the unsuccessful attempt by the Conciliation Commission to "open a door for progress towards peace" between Israel and its neighbours—in this context he declared Israel's willingness to enter into negotiations with the Commission or with any other United Nations agency on the payment of compensation to refugees for abandoned lands. He presented several conditions for such a settlement: (a) the negotiations were conditional on voluntary agreement; (b) Israel should not be asked to make more than fair compensation commensurate with its ability to pay; (c) Israel would receive international aid to finance the compensation; (d) the settle-

ment would preclude any additional claims; (e) Israel's commitment would be to the U.N. agencies and not to Arab countries or the landowners; (f) the sum due to Israel for Jewish assets that had been frozen in Iraq would be deducted from the total compensation to Arabs; (g) Israel would make such a commitment only on the basis of an agreement recognizing this to be Israel's final contribution towards a solution of the refugee problem and striking the question of their return from the agenda.

Sharett devoted the last part of his speech to Israel's policy in the global and regional settings and its response to the projected Middle East Command. He acknowledged that the government was concerned that Arab countries had been invited to participate in the command, a concern that had not been alleviated by the Arab refusal and the decision to establish the command without them. He said that the question of Israel's participation had not arisen, and declared that the government would take steps to consolidate Israel's security and economic situation so that when the time came it could contribute to regional defence. In conclusion Sharett stated: "As in the past, the government will strive to maintain amicable relations with all peace-loving countries that extend their friendship to Israel; but Israel's most vital interests dictate that it first and foremost strengthen its ties with those countries whose Jewish communities are free to assist it in its historic mission and whose governments are prepared to help it withstand the difficult trials it is undergoing today and which it will have to face in the near future."

The opposition speakers criticized Sharett's speech and Israel's foreign policy. The representatives of Mapam and the Israel Communist Party both stressed the price Israel would have to pay in exchange for U.S. aid and proposed deferring it. The representatives of Herut and the General Zionists supported the acceptance of the grant-in-aid and all U.S. assistance. They rejected, however, Sharett's statements about the refugees and faulted the government's policy *vis-à-vis* the Conciliation Commission. The representatives of all parties expressed concern at the regional defence plan, but the Mapam and Communist MKs wanted to reject any participation in such a pact. They viewed such participation as a betrayal of the Soviet Union, which had supported Israel during the War of Independence.

Ben-Gurion was the last speaker. He said that the starting point of Israel's policy was not its attitude towards any specific ideology but the urgent requirements of the country, namely: security, *aliya*, development, ties with the Diaspora, Jewish-Arab peace, and the strengthening of world peace. In order to achieve these objectives it was necessary to establish cordial relations with all countries and with all parties willing to help Israel achieve its goals. Ben-Gurion drew a

comparison between Western and Soviet society. He did not reject the Soviet system out of hand, nor did he spare criticism of American society, yet he stressed the United States' enormous contribution to the welfare of the entire world. Ben-Gurion cautioned against vain illusions that "America has identified or will identify with the State of Israel", but he made it clear that "just as America does not identify with us we do not identify with America. . . . But even if there is no identification . . . there is at least a common commitment to human rights and a free society." He added that "reducing ties with certain countries because of their domestic regimes should not prevent us from expanding relations and increasing cooperation with all those countries where this common commitment exists or is possible."

In his concluding remarks, Ben-Gurion stressed the issue of Jewish-Arab peace. He presented two conditions that would lead to peace: "the consolidation of the State of Israel" and the "liberalization and democratization of the Arab countries". He spoke of peace that would come only from genuine cooperation between the Jewish people and the Arab people and called for youth to be educated for "efficient preparedness for battle and spiritual and political preparedness for cooperation and true concord."

The opposition motions, including two motions of no confidence in the government submitted by Mapam and the Israel Communist Party, were rejected by the Knesset (*Divrei Ha-Knesset*, First Session of the Second Knesset, Vol. X, pp. 277–334).

467. W. Eytan to the Israel Legation in Paris. 5 November 1951

Notes

1. Eytan had cabled the draft of the letter that was sent to Palmer on 7 November (5 November 1951, 130.09/2344/9). See No. 470.
2. On 4 November the government discussed Israel's reply to the recent proposals by the Conciliation Commission (see No. 455). During the meeting word was received from Paris of Palmer's request that the parties inform the Commission by 6 November whether they were ready to discuss the Commission's proposals and what their initial attitude to the proposals was.

   Sharett proposed that the government display a certain flexibility in its reply and agree to commence negotiations with the Arabs on one of two conditions: either they declare non-aggression, or explicitly state that they view the Paris negotiations as a stage on the road to a peace settlement. Ben-Gurion strongly opposed offering the second condition and argued that Israel should not retract its original position on a declaration of non-aggression. He added that were such a proposal to come from the Arab side it would be possible to discuss it, but the moment that Israel advances it, it is retreating from its initial stand and thereby making a fateful error.

In Ben-Gurion's opinion Israel had already conceded more than enough by agreeing to pay compensation to Arabs without any commitment on their part to put an end to hostile acts; no further concessions should be made. Ben-Gurion also rejected Sharett's argument that the Commission was liable to blame Israel for its failure and for refusing to cooperate with a U.N. agency. The government did not approve Sharett's proposal and took the decisions cited in the present telegram.

468. W. Eytan to the Israel Embassy in Washington. 5 November 1951

Note

1. Colonel Ismail Sherine, member of the Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commission.

469. M. Comay to A. Eban. 5 November 1951

Notes

1. Comay dictated the present document, but it was signed and dispatched in his absence.
2. The consultation took place on 3 November (protocol in IMDEA, 230.27/897).
3. See No. 482.
4. Joseph Linton, Israel minister to Australia.
5. Ehud Avriel, Israel minister to Rumania until April 1951, thereafter director-general of the Prime Minister's Office.
6. Question mark in the original.
7. See No. 453, n. 2. The conversation took place on 1 November, when Shinwell was no longer Defence Minister. For a detailed report see Elath to Comay, 16 November 1951, 130.13/2582/5.

470. M. Fischer to E. E. Palmer. 7 November 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, p. 257.
2. See No. 454.
3. See No. 488.

471. M. Ishai (Rome) to G. Avner. 7 November 1951

Coded Tel.; Inc.: 130.09/2356/2

Ishai reports on his meeting with the Italian prime minister. He conveyed to him the contents of Avner's telegram,[1] and the prime minister responded positively on all points. He said that he, like Sharett, wishes to extend and strengthen Italy's friendship with Israel. He further believes that the friendship to which he aspires with the Arab states does not interfere with or prevent friendly ties with Israel. He listened attentively to Ishai's comment that states that are friendly with the Arab countries can and should encourage them to reach an agreement with Israel, and expressed tacit agreement. He showed an interest in the refugee problem and received explanations. He readily approved of the idea of visits by parliamentarians and journalists and made a note of Israel's wish to strengthen economic ties. He ended the conversation with the following words: "I aspire to a united Europe and to peace in the whole world and in the Middle East, rejoice at close cooperation, and shall work in that direction with all my might." Following the prime minister's positive response to a possible visit by Sharett to Italy, Ishai began to lay the groundwork for the visit.[2]

Notes

1. Untraced. In a letter to Avner (n. 2 below) Ishai mentions a telegram with instructions that had reached him about half an hour before the interview. Evidently this telegram was meant to replace the telegram that had been sent in the diplomatic pouch, which arrived at the legation after the meeting. (See No. 456 and n. 1 *ibid.*)
2. For a detailed report on the meeting see Ishai's letter to Avner, 7 November 1951, and also Avner's enthusiastic response to the unexpectedly positive nature of the talk in his letter to Ishai, 14 November 1951, 130.10/2515/6.

472. S. Divon (Paris) to W. Eytan. 8 November 1951

Orig.: IMDEA 890.73/695

Divon reports on a talk with Mahmud 'Azmi, member of the Egyptian delegation to the U.N. and an unofficial adviser with strong influence on the Egyptian foreign minister. Gideon Rafael also participated in the talk. (1) 'Azmi said that the Egyptian foreign minister knew of the talks and he hoped the same held true in Divon's case. (2) He said that Egypt would zealously oppose any settlement of the problem of the canal defence that involved the establishment of a Middle East

command or an extension of the Atlantic pact. The only way to solve the problem was a specific U.N. resolution empowering the establishment of a U.N. force in the canal zone, even if that force were mainly British. (3) Egypt had no intention of fighting the British army, but guerrilla actions could not be ruled out. (4) Egypt was preparing for an all-out conflict with the British, in particular in the matter of cotton. If markets for her cotton were not found in Europe, Egypt would turn to the Soviet Union. (5) There was no truth to the rumours that the Russians had warned Egypt against joining a Middle East alliance. The propaganda around this issue had been instigated intentionally. On the other hand, the situation that had arisen and Western solidarity could very well push Egypt into cooperation with the Soviets, particularly in economic matters. (6) From the statements made by the prime minister and the foreign minister in the Knesset[1] he was inclined to infer that Israel identified with the United States almost totally. (7) The Egyptians were taking into account that Israel might exploit the situation to attack the Gaza Strip and possibly Sinai. (8) The Egyptians would not view the loss of the Strip as a disaster. If a suitable formula were found, they would even be prepared to hand it over to Jordan. (9) In light of the situation that had arisen, there was a slight chance of an Israeli-Egyptian *rapprochement.* (10) Egypt-Israel relations would be greatly influenced by the serious test to Arab solidarity about to take place at the meeting of Arab delegations in Paris. If the Arab States refused to support Egypt's position on the Middle East command, and if the Arab League began to crumble, the "Pharaonic" school would prevail in Egypt and change the norms of Egyptian policy. Egypt might begin to abandon Asia and re-examine its position on several issues, including Israel. (11) 'Azmi said that it had not been possible during the previous year to arrange a meeting between Salah al-Din and the Israeli foreign minister, but there was now a chance that such a meeting would take place during the General Assembly session.

Note

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 324–26.

473. M. Sharett (Paris) to W. Eytan. 8 November 1951

Coded Tel. PTA128; Outg.: 93.02/183/3

Sharett asks for Ben-Gurion's opinion on 'Azmi's talk with Shiloah.[1] He writes that the meeting once again made it clear that Cairo was

sensitive to the possibility of Israeli action in the Strip or the Sinai Peninsula. Sharett believes it important to keep this sensitivity alive, and therefore suggests that Ben-Gurion consider ordering military activity along the border as a sign that Israel was prepared for any possiblity of a military initiative. He clarifies that he proposes a political stratagem only, not real military action; hence it is important that the army be kept under control lest they spoil the plan. According to Sharett, the main points in the talk were the possibility of a split between Egypt and the League and Egypt's willingness to participate in a regional security plan—even if it maintained a British force in the canal zone—if such a plan were sponsored by the U.N., and Egypt's staunch opposition to any other regional plan. Sharett believes that if the West were to embrace this idea, and rely on the General Assembly rather than the Security Council as the U.N. organ for regional defence, so as to circumvent the Soviet veto, the entire issue of regional defence in the Middle East would take on a new aspect. Sharett asks Eytan whether he or Shiloah can offer any ideas about how to hasten the split within the Arab League.

Note

1. See No. 472.

474. E. Herlitz to M. Sharett and W. Eytan. 8 November 1951

Note

1. No. 468.

475. M. Sasson (Tel Aviv) to the Bureau of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. 8 November 1951

Copy: 130.13/2582/5

Sasson reports on a conversation with Touqan about the internationalization of Jerusalem. Abdallah's assassination and deteriorating relations between the British and Egypt affect, in Touqan's view, the Arab states' position on the Jerusalem question. (1) Jordan's position on Jerusalem stemmed from the king's personal policy. With his disappearance from the scene, one may doubt whether Jordan will continue to oppose internationalization. There is no agency in Jordan,

after the assassination, that can oppose internationalization with the same perseverance as was displayed by the king. There are those in the government, the Foreign Ministry, the royal court and the parliament who support internationalization, just as there are other ministers who advocate continuing the king's policy. (2) On the other hand, Egypt's support for internationalization stemmed from its opposition to Abdallah. Following his death, the very basis of the Egyptian position has been undermined. One may doubt whether Egypt will be willing to persevere in its support for internationalization. (3) It may be assumed that the deepening antagonism between Britain and Egypt will lead the latter to aspire to a unified Arab front on all the issues that will be raised at the General Assembly. A separate Jordanian position on Jerusalem would mar Arab solidarity. Hence it is likely that Egypt will not be interested in raising the Jerusalem issue unless it reaches a unified position with Jordan. Thus far, Egypt has not approached Jordan for clarification of the issue. It is possible that the question will be discussed at the meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Paris. (4) Touqan assumes that if the Jerusalem problem is raised in the General Assembly Jordan will not be able to totally disavow its position of the previous year, for that would be perceived as an insult to the memory of Abdallah. On the other hand, neither could Egypt repudiate its previous position, lest it be inferred that its support for internationalization had stemmed exclusively from hatred of the king. (5) It can be assumed that the Arab states will prefer not to raise the subject in the General Assembly. (6) However, another scenario is liable to develop that would move Egypt to favour such a debate so as to gain points among Catholic countries in its conflict with the British. In this case an attempt to attain Arab unity would be made by coordinating the Egyptian and Jordanian positions. In such circumstances, were Jordan to compromise on its previous stance, it could present this as an offering to Arab solidarity rather than as a betrayal of Abdallah. (7) Touqan believes that questions such as the nature of such an Egyptian-Jordanian compromise and other issues related to the Jerusalem problem will be discussed at the conference of Arab foreign ministers in Paris.

476. M. Sharett (Paris) to A. Eban (Washington). 9 November 1951

Coded Tel. PWH11; Outg.: 93.02/183/3

Following the talk between 'Azmi and Divon,[1] Sharett raises the question of whether Israel could help accelerate the schism between Egypt

and the other Arab countries by making the West aware of the growing split within the League. It is not clear to Israel whether the Americans and British are attempting to win Arab support for the Middle East command plan by undermining Arab League unity and isolating Egypt. If this is the case, or if it is possible to nudge the West towards a policy of shattering Arab solidarity on the issue of joining a Western defence pact, Israel may be able to exploit the situation. At the same time, Israel is not unaware of the danger of appeasement at her expense, should the West prove successful. Sharett asks for Eban's opinion on the 'Azmi-Divon conversation, and instructs him to act on the suggestion made at the beginning of this telegram, should he deem this possible.

Note

1. See No. 472.

Editorial Note

Aide-Mémoire *from the Western Powers to Israel on the Middle East Command*

On 9 November the representatives of the United States, Britain, France and Turkey handed the director-general of the Foreign Ministry identical texts in English and French of an *aide-mémoire* on the principles of the Middle East command. What follows is the text handed to Eytan by the U.S. ambassador. (For the text of the *aide-mémoire,* see Main Volume, No. 477.)

477. *Aide-Mémoire* from the Government of the United States. 9 November 1951

Note

1. See No. 455.

478. M. Sharett to W. Eytan. 10 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 470.

2. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid.*
3. See No. 454.
4. See No. 474.
5. See No. 481.

479. Meeting: D. Ben-Gurion–M. B. Davis. 10 November 1951

Note

1. Cf. the report on the conversation in Ben-Gurion's diary, 10 November 1951, IMDEA.

480. A. Eban (Washington) to D. Ben-Gurion and M. Sharett. 10 November 1951

Coded Tel. WPTA8; Outg.: 93.01/2207/23

Eban reports as follows: (a) The United States is trying to isolate Egypt and persuade the other Arab countries to join the Middle East command. Israel has no interest in the success of this venture. The Arab countries are liable to demand a price for dissociating themselves from Egypt, and this could well be at Israel's expense. The Arabs would intensify their pressure on Israel, and the idea that defence of the region depends mainly on Turkey, Israel, and Britain would lose ground. (b) Eban suggests that Israel refrain from making an official reply to the Powers' declaration[1] and refer to Sharett's speech in the Knesset[2] as an exhaustive description of Israel's position. Should the command be established and a supreme commander appointed, Israel would have to determine its position. It is essential to prepare for such a contingency. (c) During the coming days Israel's representatives in Washington will try to ascertain the actual trends in the State Department and Pentagon.

Notes

1. See No. 477.
2. See Editorial Note, pp. 324–26.

481. M. Sharett to A. Eban. 11 November 1951

Note

1. The reference is to paragraph 2 in Eban's telegram to Sharett of 9 November 1951. There Eban wrote that he had informed Hickerson that Israel supported the disbanding of the Conciliation Commission and the continued existence of a body to deal with the refugees, but that it opposed the extension of Riley's powers (WPT7, 93.01/2207/13).

482. M. Comay to A. Eban. 11 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 469.
2. See Nos. 68–69 and 71–72.
3. See No. 138.
4. See No. 259.
5. See Editorial Note, pp. 324–26.
6. Cf. Ben-Gurion's diary, 5 November 1951, IMDEA.
7. See Nos. 508 and 513.

483. M. Fischer to M. Sharett. 12 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 470.
2. See No. 462.

484. E. Elath to M. Comay. 13 November 1951

Notes

1. See Editorial Note, pp. 324–26.
2. See Nos. 138 and 482.
3. Cf. Strang's report, 13 November 1951, PRO F0371/91716.

485. W. Eytan to M. Sharett and A. Eban. 13 November 1951

Note

1. Cf. No. 481.

486. M. Sharett (Paris) to W. Eytan. 13 November 1951

Coded Tel. PTA134; Outg.: 93.02/183/3

Sharett cables Ben-Gurion that Goldmann had informed him that a meeting with Adenauer in Paris had been arranged for 23 November. Goldmann added that since there was no guarantee that the talks could be kept secret, he would meet Adenauer only on condition that the government agree that, should the meeting become public knowledge, Goldmann could state that it had been approved by a leading member of the government. Sharett believes that this condition should be met and asks for Ben-Gurion's approval.[1] According to Sharett, the government had committed itself in the Knesset not to enter negotiations without discussions in the Knesset Committee, but this did not apply to the Jewish Agency. The executive committee of the Jewish organizations, elected in New York, had agreed unanimously, including Agudat Israel, that unofficial talks could be conducted in its name. A new decision was required for official negotiations only.[2]

Notes

1. Ben-Gurion agreed that Goldmann could say he had met Adenauer "with the knowledge of a member of the government" but not "with his agreement". (Eytan's telegram to Sharett, 16 November 1951, 93.02/182/10.)
2. See Editorial Note, pp. 317–18.

487. A. Eban to M. Fischer. 14 November 1951

Notes

1. Fischer sent Eban the letter that he had sent to Palmer on 7 November (No. 470) and asked him to determine the State Department's attitude towards the recent developments at the Conciliation Commission meeting in Paris (93.08/143/50).
2. See No. 368.
3. See No. 462 and n. 1 *ibid.*
4. See Guidelines to Israel Missions by M. Sharett, Briefing No. 18, 26 October 1951, 93.03/3061/7.

488. Fischer's Statement before the Palestine Conciliation Commission. 14 November 1951

Notes

1. The text of the statement is taken from the official protocol of the Conciliation Commission's session (U.N. document SR/PM/11).
2. See Nos. 462 and 470.
3. See No. 454.
4. See Editorial Note, p. 284.
5. See No. 421 (appendix B).

489. M. Fischer to W. Eytan and A. Eban. 15 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 488.
2. See No. 387 and n. 1 *ibid*, and No. 454.

490. M. Shalit [Washington] to A. Eban (Washington). 15 November 1951

Copy: 93.08/341/58

Shalit conveys his impressions and recommendations in light of the consultation on the Middle East Command conducted in the embassy on 14 November. The following conclusions were reached: (1) It would be impossible to explain to the American Jewish community an Israeli refusal to join the Middle East Command. It would be easier to persuade Mapam in Israel than members of Congress in the United States. (2) Even if Israel were merely to welcome the principle of a Middle East Command while expressing reservations at the form it took, its identification with the plan would still require some practical action on its part. (3) There is no way to avoid the principle of regional defence. In view of these conclusions, Shalit proposes: (1) As a first stage, to inform the State Department that Israel welcomed the principle of regional defence, but: (a) it had reservations about the plan in its current form; (b) it could not offer its own plan as long as it was not clear how the region would be defended, to what extent Israel could rely on the West to defend the region and not to concede it in certain stages of the war, and what would be Israel's role in

defending the region. (2) To inform the State Department that despite the fact that Israel welcomed the Middle East Command in principle and was willing to discuss the form it should take, it would not publicly announce its participation: (a) as long as the details had not been worked out or its form determined; (b) from domestic political considerations, it would be more convenient for Israel to announce its participation after American economic aid had made its mark in Israel.

On the issue of military aid, Shalit proposes informing the State Department that since it was clear that it was to be part of the overall plan and that Israel would have to coordinate this aid with the ultimate form of the Middle East Command, Israel's application for military aid would be made simultaneously with the process of clarifying these details. In the meantime, American Jewry could be informed that negotiations were taking place with the United States government; that Israel had always supported regional defence and that its disagreement with the United States government was not one of principle but related to modalities of implementing the plan. Shalit adds that his proposals had domestic advantages as well, since the government would thereby buy time; as a participant in the principle of defence, it could more effectively delay the implementation of the plan if it so wished. As a participant Israel could take steps to strengthen its industry. Finally, to the extent that economic aid would improve the situation in Israel, it would have a positive influence on Israeli public opinion. Shalit clarifies that should the Command indeed be established, the government would be able to delay a public declaration by no more than a few months. Israel would have to announce its position when Congress renewed debate on the 1952/53 budget. Until then there was time to prepare public opinion in Israel on the entire issue.

Editorial Note

Meeting between M. B. Davis and D. Ben-Gurion, 17 November 1951

On 17 November 1951 Ben Gurion invited the U.S. ambassador to Israel to submit his reply to their previous talk (No. 479). The ambassador read to him the following document. In his diary Ben-Gurion writes that Davis, after reading it out, had talked to him about "the importance of peace and stability in the region". He had said, *inter alia*: "If the Arab countries refuse to make peace and force Israel to stand on its guard and increase its defence expenditures, they should not be surprised if this leads my government to take action." In his diary Ben-Gurion pointed out the considerable significance of this

statement; he was not sure whether Davis had made it deliberately or not (Ben-Gurion's diary, 17 November 1951, IMDEA).

491. *Note Verbale* from the Government of the United States to the Government of Israel. 17 November 1951

Note

1. See No. 479.

492. M. Sharett (Paris) to F. E. Shinnar. 18 November 1951

Coded Tel. PTA148; Outg.: 93.02/183/3

In reply to Shinnar's telegram,[1] Sharett once again stresses that in his opinion it is necessary to prepare, in anticipation of the meeting with Adenauer, a list of goods and quantities to the sum of $1 billion that Israel would ask Germany to supply. The list would be general in nature and provisional, subject to change during the course of negotiations, but its very submission and a positive reaction from the Germans would assure in advance the scope of Israel's claim from Germany. Sharett explains that, in Blankenhorn's opinion, Israel will not be able to have Adenauer commit himself on a specific sum of compensation, but it could have him agree in principle to a list of goods that would give some idea of the volume and composition of the Israeli claim. He asks Shinnar to consult with Kaplan on this matter and to inform him of the outcome.[2]

Notes

1. Shinnar replied to an earlier telegram from Sharett (14 November 1951, 93.02/183/3) in which the latter had requested, in preparation for the anticipated meeting with Adenauer, that a list be drawn up of goods and quantities, to the amount of $1 billion, that Israel would ask to receive over a number of years. Shinnar wrote that in consultation with Eytan and Horowitz it was agreed that the meeting with Adenauer was not the appropriate occasion to make a detailed proposal and that it was preferable to make do with a general request for "industrial equipment, including petrochemical equipment, construction materials, capital goods, and even consumer goods" (16 November 1951, 130.09/2344/9).
2. Shinnar cabled that the requested list would be sent in the next few days. He added

that Kaplan and Horowitz had their doubts whether it was necessary to rely on the list in the talk with Adenauer, since it would be difficult for the Germans to supply the materials and equipment that Israel would request. They also expressed doubts whether the participants in the meeting would be able to conduct a practical review of the actual list. The main thing, in their opinion, was Germany's agreement to the scale of the Israeli claim (TPA296, 22 November 1951, 130.09/2344/9). See also Shinnar to Sharett, 27 November 1951, 130.10/2543/7.

493. M. Comay to A. Eban. 18 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 464.
2. See Nos. 464 and 482.

494. R. Shiloah (Tel Aviv) to W. Eytan. 18 November 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2385/31

Shiloah expresses concern that the idea of establishing a representation in the People's Republic of China was beginning to recede; it is most desirable to press forward on this matter. He suggests that the Foreign Minister take advantage of his stay in Paris to approach the Chinese, if they have unofficial representatives in Paris, or Vyshinsky or the Indians, and transmit to them Israel's request to set up a representation. Shiloah is concerned that should Israel link the establishment of a mission in China with the plan to set up missions in other Asian countries the matter would be drawn out too long. He suggests that should it prove impossible to speed up negotiations on the establishment of a diplomatic representation, perhaps it would be possible to begin by appointing a consul or commercial representative.

495. A. Eban to M. Sharett and W. Eytan. 19 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 479.
2. Israel asked for $126 million in aid. The memorandum of 19 November 1951 is in file 93.08/342/38.
3. Philip Glick, legal counsel to the Technical Cooperation Administration.
4. See No. 464.

496. A. Eban (Washington) to E. Herlitz and P. Eliav (Washington). 19 November 1951

Orig.: 93.08/341/15

Eban writes of the Prime Minister's serious concern that Riley might be granted political authority by the U.N. in addition to his functions stemming from the armistice agreements. Eban, too, fears that the failure of the Conciliation Commission talks will intensify the inclination to transfer to Riley the mediation powers of the Commission. Some of Riley's ideas for a settlement are a matter of concern to Israel, such as: partition of the demilitarized zone between Israel and Syria; demarcation of the border between Syria and Israel at the water line; territorial concessions to Egypt in exchange for Egyptian compliance with the Security Council resolution on Suez; settlement of refugees around Hebron and Beersheba; etc. Moreover, in contrast to the Conciliation Commission, which had been shunted to the sidelines, Riley has managed to mobilize Great Power support for his proposals, both through the Security Council and by approaching each government separately. Thus there are precedents for the formulation of Security Council motions by Riley. Moreover, he is also working vigorously to implement Security Council resolutions. When it becomes clear that Israel opposes these resolutions, he denounces Israel in Washington and at the United Nations, creating an atmosphere in the State Department, the White House, the Munitions Board, and Congress that has made it difficult for Israel to obtain the assistance it so desperately needs. So far the altercations with Riley had been only over armistice-related events; each time that Riley had deviated from that context it had been possible to remind him that his authority was limited and restricted to armistice matters, whereas the Conciliation Commission was responsible for a political solution. If, therefore, Riley were granted the authority of a mediator, Israel would find itself in the perilous situation of being unable to evade Riley's solutions.

Eban instructs his staff to emphasize to their State Department contacts (Waldo and Ludlow) that Israel strongly opposes any explicit extension of Riley's authority. They should not express personal reservations with regard to Riley, but rather should stress that the armistice agreements give the parties every possibility of advancing towards more stable political and juridical relations and that Riley's role as supervisor of the armistice would be impaired and hampered were he to be charged with devising political solutions.

It is in Israel's interest that the Conciliation Commission be dissolved, that Riley remain in his position with the same powers granted him to fulfill his function, and that the United Nations have an agency

for dealing with the problems of the refugees. Should it be claimed that dissolution of the Conciliation Commission would create a vacuum, a special clause, informing the parties that the U.N. institutions are at their disposal any time they wish to make peace, could be added to the resolution terminating its existence.

Note

1. See Nos. 481 and 485.

497. A. Eban to M. Sharett. 19 November 1951

Notes

1. At the Sixth General Assembly, the Soviet Union once again submitted a motion for the agenda on the problem of the Chinese representation at the United Nations. The General Committee recommended that the Assembly not discuss the replacement of the representative of Nationalist China by the representative of the People's Republic of China at the Sixth Session. The Western delegates argued against a debate on the representation of China by the Peking government at a time when this government was flouting the U.N.'s authority in Korea. The proposal to accept the General Committee's recommendation was defeated by a vote of 37 to 11, with 4 abstentions. Israel voted against the proposal.
2. Senator Joseph McCarthy (Republican, Wisconsin).
3. Sharett rejected Eban's proposal and arguments. He made it clear that Israel had voted with India, Sweden, and other countries because, in its opinion, there was no justification for the General Assembly to tie its own hands when there was a chance for a cease-fire in Korea. He added that Israel would not have supported the admission of China when the fighting was at its height, but at the moment it appeared that the war was about to end (telegram to Eban, 21 November 1951, 93.02/183/3).

498. Meeting: M. Sharett–D. Acheson. 19 November 1951

Notes

1. Aluf David Shaltiel, military, naval, and air attaché at the Israel Legation in Paris.
2. See Vol. 5, No. 517 (appendix), and No. 156 above.
3. See Nos. 68–69 and 71–72.
4. See No. 479.
5. See No. 495, n. 2.
6. See Editorial Note, pp. 287–88.
7. Cf. report on the meeting in *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp. 935–40.

499. Note from the Department of State to the Israel Ambassador to the United States. 20 November 1951

Note

1. See No. 460.

500. M. Sharett to W. Eytan. 20 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 486, n. 1.
2. See No. 518.
3. See No. 492, n. 1.
4. In another telegram to the Prime Minister, Sharett made it clear that he "strongly favours a meeting with A[denauer] and ignoring the backwash of demagoguery and cowardice." He added that "the meeting should not be delayed and it would be a shame to postpone it", that in his opinion Goldmann was "the most effective candidate", and that the latter was justified in his demand that, should it prove necessary, he enjoy the public protection of the Government (telegram from Sharett to Eytan, 22 November 1951, 130.02/183/8).

501. Israel Legation in Moscow to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 22 November 1951

Coded Tel. 467; Inc.: 130.10/2551/8

Eliashiv transmits the full text of the letter handed to him by Gromyko.[1] The letter reads as follows:

The government of the U.S.S.R. feels obliged to inform the government of Israel as follows: On 14 October of this year reports were published in the press of proposals made by the governments of the United States, England, France and Turkey in which they officially approached the Egyptian government concerning the establishment of a unified Middle East Command ostensibly for the joint "defence" of the Near and Middle East.[2] It is also known that these proposals were submitted to the governments of Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Israel and Transjordan. On 10 November there were published declarations by the governments of the United States, England, France and Turkey on the same question to the governments of the abovementioned countries.[3] These proposals stipulate a "Unified Middle East Command", stationing foreign troops on Egyptian territory and in other Middle Eastern countries, location of the Command headquar-

ters on Egyptian territory and placement of armed forces, military bases, transport facilities, harbours and other installations at the disposal of the Supreme Command by Egypt and the other countries in the region. At the same time the proposals stipulate that the Command would ostensibly be linked to NATO. It follows from the proposals and declarations of the four governments that the aim of their demand for a joint regional command is to draw the countries of the region into the means implemented by the Atlantic bloc on the pretext of organizing a regional "defence". As the government of the U.S.S.R. has noted in official documents on more than one occasion, the goals of NATO have absolutely nothing to do with the defence of its members. On the contrary, the facts demonstrate that the alliance has aggressive objectives and is targeted against the U.S.S.R. and the people's democracies. At the same time, its aims are inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the U.N., which are the preservation of peace and establishment of friendly relations among peoples, not the creation of political blocs directed against others. The actions of the initiators of NATO in Europe and other regions demonstrate that it is an instrument of the imperialist aggressive policy of its creators, the United States first and foremost. This alone is enough to prove that the suggested Command idea contained in the proposals of the four countries has absolutely nothing to do with the interest of preserving peace and security in the East and the true national interests of the countries of the region. This is apparent also from the fact that the organization of such a Command is linked with broad projects for establishing new military bases and expanding existing ones in Egypt, Iraq and other countries in the East, the continued presence of foreign military forces and the introduction of additional forces to their territory, despite the clear will of their inhabitants. Realization of the plan for the establishment of the Command would in practice lead to the occupation of the countries of the East by the armies of the NATO members, first and foremost those of the United States and England, and also of several other countries, including Australia and New Zealand, which are twelve to fifteen thousand kilometers distant from the region. The implications of such a situation for the countries of the East is readily apparent from the example of some of them occupied decades ago by foreign military forces that continue to be stationed there today despite the just demands of the peoples of those countries for the withdrawal of foreign armies from their soil. The occupation of Near and Middle East countries by foreign armies and the establishment of foreign military bases on their territory, in accordance with the plans for creating the Middle East Command, can only lead to a loss of independence and sovereignty by these countries and their submission to certain major powers who seek to exploit their territory, material assets, petroleum, cotton, etc. to further their aggressive purposes. Reference to the objective of defending the countries of the

East is no more than camouflage to involve the countries of the East in the military objectives of NATO against the U.S.S.R. and the people's democracies. In this connection the government of the U.S.S.R. wishes to emphasize that since the initial establishment of the Soviet state the Soviet government has adopted an understanding and sympathetic attitude towards the national aspirations of the peoples of the East and their struggle for national independence and sovereignty. Unlike those countries that habitually considered the countries of the Near and Middle East to be their colonies, the U.S.S.R., in accordance with its fixed policy of supporting the just national demands of nations large and small, has always recognized their right of self-determination to the point of creating independent states, as the Jewish people well knows. Such U.S.S.R. policy is compatible not only with the fundamental national interests of the nations of the East but also with the objective of preserving world peace. The government has always consistently followed a peaceful policy, as is attested by the substantive proposals for strengthening peace and security that the U.S.S.R. has made on more than one occasion and now presents to the U.N., calling for an end to the arms race, for a ban on atomic weapons, for a one-third reduction in the armed forces of the five major powers, for an end to the war of aggression in Korea, and for a formal act of peace. All of this proves the absurdity of all kinds of declarations concerning a threat of any sort to the countries of the East, on the basis of which some try to justify the need to establish the so-called Command, and points to the true aims of the United States, England, France and Turkey in their proposals to establish such a Command. The Soviet government feels it necessary to draw the attention of the government of Israel to the fact that Israel's participation in the so-called Middle East Command would cause serious damage to the relations existing between the U.S.S.R. and Israel as well as to the preservation of peace and security in the Near and Middle East.[4]

Notes

1. The letter was delivered on 21 November; that same evening Eliashiv wrote the present telegram (see Eliashiv's telegram to the Foreign Ministry, 21 November 1951, 130.09/2325/6).
2. See No. 426.
3. See No. 477 and Editorial Note, p. 332.
4. See Israel's reply in No. 521.

502. D. Ben-Gurion and E. Kaplan (Tel Aviv) to A. Eban (Washington). 23 November 1951

Coded Tel. IWA899; Inc.: 93.01/2207/23

Ben-Gurion and Kaplan ask that Warburg[1] be informed of the following: During the past year, two unforeseen events had forced Israel to expend certain sums on extraordinary purchases that were above its normal capability. The drought in Israel and the absorption of Iraqi Jews have caused a situation wherein Israel cannot meet its commitments unless it obtains $10 million by 10 December. They are asking Warburg to make a supreme effort to raise this sum. The grant from the United States will not be received until the end of December and will help the country meet its vital needs over the coming year if the results of the UJA and Israel Bonds are not disappointing. Meanwhile, everything is liable to collapse should Israel be unable to meet its financial obligations. The matter is top secret.

Note

1. Edward Warburg, chairman of the American Joint Distribution Committee and general chairman of the United Jewish Appeal.

503. Meeting: M. Sharett–A. Eden. (Paris, 23 November 1951)

Notes

1. See No. 498.
2. Cf. the report on the conversation, 23 November 1951, PRO FO371/91716.

504. M. Ishai (Rome) to G. Avner. 23 November 1951

Coded Tel. MPR9; Inc.: 130.09/2356/2

Ishai reports on Halevi's talk with the head of the Middle East division in the Italian Foreign Ministry. The conversation took place on 22 November with the participation of Gasparini.[1] Halevi presented Israel's position in accordance with Avner's instructions.[2] The Italians expressed their satisfaction with the Israeli proposals but claimed that caution and deliberation were required. Account must be taken of the

special sensitivity in the Middle East. They eagerly welcomed any practical step to solve the actual problems that were still outstanding. They noted the proposal for exchange visits by parliamentary delegations. They would investigate the possibility of a visit by the Foreign Minister in the second half of December. They did not react positively to the proposal for a friendship treaty, noting that they had to keep the Arab world in mind. They mentioned Turkey, which had lost its influence in the Arab world because of its friendship with Israel. Another meeting was arranged to discuss economic problems.

Notes

1. Carlo Gasparini, an official in the Middle East Department of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. See No. 456 and n. 1 *ibid.*

505. E. Sasson to W. Eytan. 24 November 1951

Note

1. See No. 477.

506. A. Eban (Washington) to M. Sharett (Paris). 26 November 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2449/1

Eban encloses a memorandum by Shalit and Giladi on Israel's participation in the Middle East defence scheme[1] and adds his comments. Eban thinks that at this stage Israel need not adopt a public and explicit stance on the question of Middle East defence, but there is no telling how much time will elapse until Israel does have to decide. In his opinion the central issue is not participation in the Middle East Command, but willingness to request and receive military assistance in the framework of the U.S. mutual assistance program. The question is, what concrete advantage will accrue to Israel from accepting such aid. Eban proposes two subjects for discussion: (1) In light of the military assistance that Israel's neighbours are receiving gratis from foreign military powers, Israel must act with extreme responsibility when the opportunity for increasing its military potential by relying on a friendly foreign power presents itself. The responsibility towards the

Israeli public, which faces a danger to its survival, obliges Israel to accept American military aid. (2) Moreover, Eban argues that the government has no right to request that the Israeli public bear the financial burden of defence expenditures when it has the option of saving on them by means of American aid. He deems it necessary to consider whether it will be worthwhile to sacrifice economic stability and military efficiency for the sake of diplomatic convenience and a sense of satisfaction. Eban is convinced that the shortage of modern weapons and the perpetual gap in the balance of payments are both more prejudicial and dangerous to Israel's stability and security than the presence of an American military mission on Israeli soil, although he also admits that it would be preferable if Israel could avoid the dispatch of such a delegation.

Note

1. The memorandum has been omitted here.

507. G. Rafael (Paris) to M. Sharett (Paris). 26 November 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2447/11

Rafael reports on a talk with Palmer on 12 November. Rafael said that he had come to discuss how the Palestine problem will be handled at the next General Assembly. The commission's attitude will certainly influence the course of the debates. Rafael stated the following assumptions: (1) The Paris conference had failed. (2) There is a conflict between the West and the Arab countries along the entire front from Morocco to Iran. (3) In U.N. circles there is no desire to continue the traditional political debate on the Palestine problem. (4) The plans for a regional defence organization require a cautious and considered approach that would not be detrimental to Israeli interests. (5) Within a few months, developments within the Arab League are liable to create new situations that could have a positive impact on a solution to the Arab-Israeli problem, but at this stage no progress towards Israel-Arab *rapprochement* can be expected. Palmer replied that he accepted all these assumptions and had already reached the conclusion that the Paris conference was doomed to failure. In view of their agreement, Rafael suggested that Palmer consider the proposal that the Palestine debate in the coming General Assembly concentrate on a solution to the refugee problem through the

agency of the United Nations by settling them in Arab countries. This would be the first time that the United States came to the debate bearing an appropriation of $50 million. Israel is prepared to discuss its share in compensation payments with the U.N. These two factors can create a favourable basis for a constructive resolution by the Assembly. Rafael explained that it was possible to surprise the General Assembly by coming up with a solution to one of the urgent problems arising out of the Palestine war. This approach is likely to reduce friction between the West and the Arab states by removing the political problems from the U.N. agenda. Palmer concurred with Rafael's stance and said that the Commission intended to wind up the Paris Conference immediately after receiving the replies from Israel and the Arab delegations and to submit its report to the General Assembly. It intends to submit a factual report which would explain the reasons for failure and assess the chances for peace. It does not intend to offer the Assembly the proposals made to the sides for a solution to the Palestine problem. It is prepared to note in its conclusions Israel's willingness to cooperate with the U.N. in solving the refugee problem, if Israel clearly states this position in its reply to the Commission's proposals. But he believed that it was better to avoid a political debate in the U.N. on the Palestine question, and thought it preferable to combine the debate on the two agenda items dealing with Palestine — Blandford's report[1] and that of the Commission. At the end of the conversation, he explained that his only intent in pressuring the delegation to relate to the Commission's proposals was to prevent the blame for the failure of the conference from being laid at Israel's door for technical and formal reasons. For this reason he was pleased to learn that Israel would submit its comments to the Commission.[1]

Note

1. See No. 489 (appendix).

508. M. Comay to E. Elath. 27 November 1951

Notes

1. See No. 138.
2. The meeting took place on 3 December. See No. 513.
3. See No. 156.
4. See Nos. 68 and 72.

509. Memorandum by M. Sharett. 29 November 1951

Notes

1. Sharett handed the memorandum to the Secretary-General on 29 November, following their meeting two days earlier. (See the report on the meeting in Sharett's telegram to Eban, PT178, 28 November 1951, 93.02/183/3.)
2. In original: guide.

Editorial Note

Israel's Reply to the Three Powers' Note on German Reparations

On 30 November, Israel's representatives in the Western capitals submitted the Israeli reply to the notes of the United States, France and Britain, dated 5 July 1951 (see No. 254 and Editorial Note, p. 188). The texts of the three notes were similar, except for paragraph 10 in the reply to the United States, which focused on the problem of Germany's ability to pay reparations, which the Americans had raised in their note. No note was delivered to the Soviet government, since it had not replied to the Israeli note of 12 March and had not reacted to an Israeli reminder on the subject. What follows is the text of the note that Eban handed to James Webb, the American Undersecretary of State. When he delivered the note Eban stressed the Allies' obligation to explain to Adenauer their position on the reparations question. He stated that if the Western foreign ministers failed to mention the problem of reparations in their talks with Adenauer he was liable to think that the matter was unimportant, thereby weakening the Israeli position. In this context Webb mentioned that McCloy had intervened with Adenauer, but he did not specify the nature of the intervention. (See Eban's telegram to Sharett, WPT18, 30 November 1951, 93.01/2207/23; Avner to Israel missions abroad, 4 December 1951, 130.10/2515/1; Information to Israel Missions Abroad, 17 December 1951, 93.03/3028/1.)

510. Note from the Government of Israel to the Government of the United States. 30 November 1951

Notes

1. No. 254.
2. No. 84.
3. See Vol. 5, No. 148.

4. See No. 243
5. For the reply by the U.S. government, see the note dated 24 January 1952, 93.08/344/23.

511. A. Kubovy (Prague) to the East European Division. 2 December 1951

Coded Tel. P302; Inc.: 130.09/2343/1

Kubovy reports on a conversation with Skrzeszewski on 30 November. Skrzeszewski said that the great wave of emigration was over, but there was still room for individual consideration in certain cases. He spoke on behalf of the government and in the wake of his last talk with Kubovy. Kubovy replied that some individual cases had received attention in the last few months, but they had not been treated positively and the results were negligible. The question was whether it was possible to understand Skrzeszewski's words as indicating an improvement of the current situation. Skrzeszewski replied that he could add nothing to what he had said at the start of the meeting. Kubovy continued to raise questions, and Skrzeszewski later stated explicitly that it would be possible to handle cases of the sort presented by Kubovy. Indirectly he hinted that no conclusions should be drawn from the previous treatment, which reflected the period prior to the government decision. From the conversation, Kubovy concludes that some progress has been made. If the government has indeed reconsidered the question of emigration to Israel and had not closed the door, this represents a significant change of direction. In the coming weeks it would be possible to find out whether matters had indeed advanced. Kubovy assumes that Skrzeszewski is apprehensive lest a clearer statement arouse both Jews and non-Jews, and also that his personal stance on the question is unfriendly. He adds that some say that the change on the emigration question is a result of the activities of the *Yevsektzia*, which assembled its minions in a number of localities and ordered them to make every effort to have candidates for emigration withdraw their applications. Every day the *Folksshtimme* excoriates Israel; basing itself on articles from *Kol Ha-'am*, it accuses the Israeli government of having allied itself with the "Nazi murderers" for a Third World War. The goal of these attacks is to frighten Jews away from any contact with the staff of the legation.

After an exchange about the emigration question Skrzeszewski told Kubovy that speeches he had delivered in a number of Polish cities, in which he had spoken in favour of the emigration of Polish citizens of Jewish origin, contradicted the accepted norms and Polish law. Kubovy was astonished at this remark and made it clear that if the reference was

to the *Yizkor* speech he had delivered in Cracow, he had spoken there about the friendship between Israel and Poland. He also pointed out that the Polish consul in Israel gives speeches in various towns there, publishes bulletins, and arranges exhibitions, and Israel has no objections to this. The meeting wound up in a generally good atmosphere.[2]

Notes

1. Sattath reported on the organization by divided families to work for the *aliya* of family members who had been left behind in Poland and on indications of a slight shift in the attitude of the authorities to the subject of family reunification (130.11/2502/11).
2. After the meeting with Skrzeszewski, Y. Laron, the counsellor in the Israeli legation, met Sluczański in order to obtain details about the decision on immigration. Sluczański confirmed his foreign minister's announcement that the government had decided to allow family reunification and even hinted at an increase in the number of passports to about 5,000. Laron noted that Sluczański was "exceptionally friendly" (telegram from Laron to the Foreign Ministry, 3 December 1951, 130.09/2306/4; Laron to East European Division, 6 December 1951, 130.11/2492/20).

512. M. Sharett to W. Eytan. 3 December 1951

Notes

1. The Ad-Hoc Committee of the General Assembly was scheduled to convene on 4 December to discuss the appointment of a committee to investigate the possibilities of holding elections in Germany.
2. Sharett explained why he favoured Israeli attendance at the Ad Hoc Committee, in opposition to the approach of Ben-Gurion and Eytan. Ben-Gurion believed that "one speech in Israel's name was sufficient", while Eytan feared that Israel would be stretching too far if it presented the same overworked approach and Sharett would not encounter a receptive audience. (See Eytan's telegram to Sharett, TP295, 21 November 1951, 130.09/2344/9.) Sharett explained that in view of his dramatic intervention against placing the German question on the agenda during the debate in the Assembly plenum "it is inconceivable that we hold our peace when the actual debate gets under way". He made it clear that the delegation did not intend to display demonstrative opposition to the proposal to send a committee of enquiry to Germany, but rather to influence the definition of its mission by including the task of "first clarifying the extent to which the Nazi spirit has been uprooted from the soul of the German people and to what extent the German people are ready, not only to hold democratic elections, but also to take advantage of these elections to implement genuine democracy in their life". Sharett added that at the outset it should be stated that "we are not thirsty for vengeance. . . . Vengeance for the rivers of blood that were spilled is in any case quite beyond the realm of possibility". "The crux of the speech must not be the Jewish issue, but rather concern for the future of democracy and world peace, which are the mortal enemies of neo-Nazism (especially if armed)" (CZA A245/82).

3. Eytan cabled Sharett that the Foreign Ministry staff supported his position, but that Ben-Gurion disagreed and left to Sharett the final decision on how to act (TP320, 5 December 1951; TP321, 6 December 1951, 130.09/2344/9).

513. E. Elath to M. Comay. 4 December 1951

Notes

1. See No. 508.
2. See detailed report on the conversation in Elath's letter to Comay, 5 December 1951, 130.13/2582/5; cf. also Eden's report, 5 December 1951, PRO FO371/91716.

514. M. Sharett (Paris) to D. Ben-Gurion. 4 December 1951

Copy: 130.02/2455/1

Sharett presents his postulates and proposals with regard to military assistance from the United States.

Postulates: (1) Israel requires large quantities of weapons, both heavy and light. (2) It is extremely difficult for Israel to acquire foreign currency with which to purchase weapons. (3) Some types of armaments cannot be purchased at any price, but can be acquired through political negotiations. (4) Even acquisition of weapons at full price generally requires a pro-Israel political decision. (5) There are good chances, though no certainty, that Israel will be able to obtain weapons at no cost. (6) A request for military assistance from the United States is desirable from the Israeli perspective as a counterweight to explain Israel's inability to join the Middle East defence pact officially. (7) Such a request might exempt Israel from having to make any other announcement of support for the Western defence programs that might prove to be essential in obtaining grant-in-aid funds for 1952/53. (8) The political damage involved in military aid can be mitigated by negotiations and an information campaign aimed at adjusting the conditions of the military assistance to Israel's special circumstances.

Proposals: (1) To approach the United States government at once and request Israel's share of the $40-million appropriation for the military reinforcement of the Middle East in the framework of the Mutual Defense Act of 1951/52. (2) To submit without delay, in addition to the request for a grant of $126 million for the new fiscal year (1951/52), a special request for an additional amount intended to strengthen Israel's defence capability through civilian construction projects (expanding harbours, paving roads, etc.). The content rather

than the title of the request should indicate that it is intended to meet Israel's defence needs. (3) To start work immediately on preparing a comprehensive military assistance package, consisting of weapons and war materiel, that would cover Israel's estimated share of the $40-million appropriation, so that this sum can be deducted from the total if given separately.

Sharett reached the above conclusions as follows: first, Israel will lose nothing by submitting the request. On the contrary, the request is likely to exert pressure that may perhaps speed up the tempo of the decision in Israel's favour. Even if the request has no direct results in terms of military assistance, it can engender a moral obligation to meet other Israeli requests. On the other hand, postponing the submission of an Israeli request might be interpreted erroneously, as meaning that Israel has no urgent need for weapons; or that Israel has reservations about a military link with the United States and its support of the Western defence plan is only lip service exacted under duress. Second, the fact that the West is "thick" with Arab countries must not deter Israel from submitting a request. It is in just such a situation of shilly-shallying by the United States that Israel must make a quick move. It is better to anticipate the Arabs than to trail behind them. Third, the absence to date of American pressure on Israel to request aid is no cause for comfort. It is better to take the initiative and ask willingly than to make the step later, when there is no choice, under pressure from public criticism or Congressional opposition and out of fear that the aid campaign might fail. Fourth, it is no more difficult to explain to the Soviet Union Israel's request for American military aid than to explain the financial aid. The Russians know full well that Israel is in urgent need of weapons and can obtain them only from the West. Fifth, as long as Israel has not submitted a request it cannot be certain that it hasn't missed the boat. Sixth, the question of a military mission and supervision will not arise if the request is not met. Should there be signs that the request will be granted, a price will have to be paid. Sharett believes that Israel must not despair of the possibility of arriving at a special arrangement. Seventh, Proposal 2 above is designed to strengthen Israel's economic capability. Opening such a door can benefit Israel if it becomes clear that the United States is interested in strengthening Israel in some regional framework but is as yet unable to appropriate funds for armaments. Eighth, Proposal 3 does not refer to immediate action, but only to steps to be taken after the manner of implementation of Proposal 1 becomes clear. In any case it is worthwhile to prepare the diplomatic material well in advance.

Sharett asks to be informed of Ben-Gurion's final resolve in view of the fact that the decision on the matter has long been delayed.

515. K. Adenauer to N. Goldmann. 6 December 1951

Notes

1. The translation is attached to the original letter in the file.
2. On the circumstances in which the letter was sent, see No. 518.
3. See Editorial Note, pp. 287–88.
4. See No. 84.

516. M. B. Davis to D. Ben-Gurion. 6 December 1951

Note

1. For developments on the issue, see No. 522.

517. J. E. Webb to A. Eban. 7 December 1951

Notes

1. James E. Webb, U.S. Undersecretary of State; Deputy Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and of the International Monetary Fund.
2. See Eban to Webb, 7 December 1951, 93.03/3063/11. The exchange of letters between Eban and Webb served as an interim agreement between the U.S. and the government of Israel on the implementation of the Mutual Security Act, 1951.

518. E. Elath to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 7 December 1951

Note

1. See No. 515.

519. Meeting: M. Sharett–E. Plitt (Paris, 29 November 1951, document dated 7 December 1951)

Report: 130.02/2455/1

Edwin Plitt, of the U.S. delegation to the General Assembly, requested an urgent interview with Sharett. Sharett agreed despite the difference in rank between them, because of Plitt's presence at the Sharett-Acheson talk.[1] Plitt asked for a clarification of statements made by

Sharett in the conversation with Acheson with regard to a hint Israel had received from an official or unofficial source in the United States about relations with China. Sharett had in fact made such a statement but had omitted his remarks from the written report as a measure of caution. Plitt made it clear to Sharett that the State Department considers recognition of the People's Republic of China to be a mistake as long as China is considered an aggressor and fights against the U.N. forces. The U.S. opposition to recognition does not apply to Israel, which had recognized China before the outbreak of hostilities. However, the department holds that it is not desirable to establish diplomatic ties with China in the current situation, since this would merely encourage China in its present attitude. Sharett replied that he could not engage in debate with the State Department on this subject, but that what he had heard came from a government source and should be clarified with the same. With regard to the issue itself, Sharett pointed out that were the armistice negotiations to succeed, China would *ipso facto* cease to be an aggressor and Plitt's argument would no longer be valid. Sharett adds that perhaps it is to be regretted that Israel failed to establish ties with China immediately after granting it recognition.

Note

1. See No. 498.

520. Meeting: M. Sharett–J. Blandford (Paris, 3 December 1951, document dated 7 December 1951)

Report: 130.02/2451/13

Blandford responded to Sharett's memorandum to the U.N. Secretary-General.[1] He said that the memorandum was based on the erroneous assumption that UNRWA would be able to handle all aspects of the refugee problem, including negotiations with Israel on the payment of compensation. He has a different view of the problem as a whole and of UNRWA's function. UNRWA is concerned with finding jobs, housing and settlement possibilities for the refugees. From a tactical point of view, since the Agency is interested in cooperation with the Arab governments, it is not in its interest to be responsible for the political aspects of the problem. The Arab countries are not prepared to relinquish the principle of return and are careful to distinguish between finding employment for refugees on their territory and the right to compensation. The public served by UNRWA is not necessarily identi-

cal with those claiming compensation. Sharett once again explained that Israel viewed the question of compensation as a matter between the U.N. and Israel and not between Israel and the claimants or even between Israel and the Arab countries. Israel would make only global compensation and only to a U.N. agency. Blandford agreed with this but claimed that implementation of the Israeli approach required the establishment of a special body, and there was no possibility that the agency he headed could play this role. He expressed doubt whether Israel would succeed in putting an end to the issue of refugee repatriation at the forthcoming General Assembly. Sharett replied that an end to the issue of the return of the refugees was Israel's condition for entering into negotiations with the U.N. on the matter of compensation. One could not request a final commitment on compensation from Israel as long as it could expect unlimited demands for repatriation. Moreover, were Israel confronted with a claim for the return of the refugees it would not be able to make progress on compensation, and its commitment on this matter would not remain valid indefinitely. Blandford replied that the commitment was a matter of principle involving international responsibility, and he was not in favour of mixing the sums earmarked for compensation with the allocation for absorption. In his view, contributions to the absorption fund made up one account, and Israeli compensation payments to the claimants another. Sharett once again asked whether the four-country commission that is to convene twice a year to approve the Agency's programme could not also serve as the U.N. instrumentality for negotiations with Israel on the question of compensation. Blandford rejected the idea. He argued that it was preferable to set up a separate body in New York to deal with the question of compensation. He was not opposed to Sharett's proposal that the body to be set up in New York be identical in composition to the four-country commission. At the end of the conversation, Blandford asked how long Israel would impose on the United Nations the burden of the 23,000 refugees within its territory. He also told Sharett that the idea of expanding Riley's authority was still circulating in U.N. corridors. Sharett was impressed by Blandford's businesslike approach; he concentrates on carrying out his function and is concerned lest he be disturbed in this by superfluous intervention or an undesirable comprehensive settlement.

Note

1. See No. 509

Editorial Note

Note Verbale *from the Government of Israel to the Government of the U.S.S.R.*

On 8 December the Israel minister in Moscow, Shmuel Eliashiv, read the text of the following declaration to Zorin, the Soviet deputy foreign minister, and then handed him the written text. In response, Zorin said that he would transmit the substance of the note to his government, but had a number of comments to make on paragraph 7. He said that "the news items that appear in the [Soviet] press originate in the foreign press, including that of Israel, and what is written there ought not to influence the relations between states, which are determined by other factors." Eliashiv replied that Israel had no intention of giving instructions to the press and that he felt that he had delivered "an authentic declaration that the information in the [Soviet] press concerning us is inaccurate." He concluded by expressing the hope for an exchange of views concerning the various matters covered in this declaration. (See telegram from Eliashiv to the Foreign Ministry, IP851, 9 December 1951, 130/09/2325/6; see also the correspondence about the disagreement between Ben-Gurion and Sharett on the phrasing of several paragraphs in the note: telegram from Eytan to Eliashiv, 8 December 1951, 130.09/2377/1; Levavi to Eliashiv, 9 December 1951, 25 December 1951, 130.11/2492/17; Eliashiv to Levavi, 9 December 1951, 130.11/2493/9; telegram from Sharett to Eytan, 12 December 1951, 93.02/183/3; Eytan to Eliashiv, 21 December 1951, 130.02/2832/10.)

521. *Note Verbale* from the Government of Israel to the Government of the U.S.S.R. Delivered on 8 December 1951

130.20/2491/13

1. The Government of Israel has given due consideration and attention to the written reply dated 21.11.51 submitted to it by the Government of the U.S.S.R.[1]

2. Israel has not been invited to join the "Middle East Command" and no question concerning its participation has arisen. Therefore, the Government of Israel has not defined its view of the nature and form of the Command. It is therefore apparent that the Government of Israel has not decided to join this Command. At the same time, Israel

has received a statement from the powers involved in organizing the "Middle East Command" to the effect that this Command had no aggressive intent or purpose.

3. Israel considers its dominant security problem to be the threat posed by Arab countries that refuse to make peace with it. Since peace is indivisible, all members of the United Nations, especially the great powers, are obliged, in Israel's opinion, to take practical steps and vigorous action in order to remove this threat to the peace of Israel and the Middle East.

4. Israel views the preservation of peace throughout the world as the loftiest objective of international policy. Likewise, Israel knows that world peace is essential to ensure its own safety, survival, future and development.

5. Israel has defended and will always defend with all its might the precious asset that it has acquired by a long and costly struggle: national independence and sovereignty. Israel well remembers, and will not forget, that at a critical political stage its struggle for independence enjoyed the generous and most important support of the U.S.S.R.

6. Israel has not agreed and will not agree to assist aggressive acts or preparations against the Soviet Union or any other peace-loving country.

7. With regard to paragraphs 4–6 above, Israel draws the attention of the Government of the U.S.S.R. to the news items repeatedly published during the last two years or so throughout the Soviet press, including the most responsible Soviet organs, concerning the ostensible establishment of foreign bases in Israel. These items are absolutely untrue, since no foreign military bases exist in our country; to our regret, these news items are liable to damage the relations between our two countries. The Government of Israel, on the other hand, has a strong desire to maintain cordial relations with the Soviet Union.

8. As the Government of the U.S.S.R. is aware, the return of Jews to their historic homeland constitutes the central *raison d'être* of the State of Israel. The Government of Israel realizes that only the maintenance of world peace and normal relations among the various countries will allow us to develop our land and absorb all those Jews wishing to return. In this context, the Government of Israel requests that the U.S.S.R. allow those Jews in the Soviet Union who so wish to emigrate to Israel. The Government of Israel believes that this request is fully compatible with the policy of the U.S.S.R., which is based on national equality and the right of all peoples to self-determination.

9. The Government of Israel expresses its sincere hope that the exchange of opinions between the U.S.S.R. and Israel on the matter at

hand will clarify the problems that have arisen and lead to a further improvement of relations between the two countries.

Note

1. See No. 501.

522. A. Eban (Washington) to D. Ben-Gurion (Tel Aviv) and M. Sharett (Paris). 10 December 1951

Coded Tel. WPTA27; Outg.: 93.01/2207/24

Eban reports on the situation in Korea in light of his talks in the U.N. division of the State Department: (1) The United States tends to believe that an armistice will be concluded in the near future. (2) Even then, the United Nations' military obligation to the South will remain in force. (3) The United States is extremely interested in reducing the number of American soldiers serving in Korea. In talks with Eban, State Department officials indicated their desire to see the U.N. forces take on an international character so as to eliminate any impression that the U.S. has expansionist aspirations in Korea, as reflected in an army of occupation. There also seems to be the domestic consideration of bringing the soldiers home from Korea during the election year. (4) The United States has approached many countries in addition to Israel.[1] The U.N. Secretary-General will make an official approach only after it becomes clear that there is a likelihood of recruiting other countries. (5) The State Department tends to accept with understanding the argument that many countries that are not surrounded by enemies and are not beset by economic crises have not responded to the call, and that it is unfair to expect Israel to be among the first volunteers.

Eban's assessment and recommendations follow: (1) For the time being there is no crisis as a result of the U.S. request to Israel. On the other hand, it is possible to avoid a totally negative reply. The response should be that Israel continues to consider the matter, but its special difficulties are great. (2) Should an armistice be concluded, the situation would be totally altered, from both the international and the domestic perspectives. An armistice in Korea would in fact constitute an agreement between the United States and Russia in the framework of the U.N.; in that case, participation in policing the zone would not be interpreted as adoption of an active and conspicuous stand in the global struggle. In these circumstances, if it appears that

Israeli participation would further relations with the United States and the United Nations, Israel must seriously consider a favourable response, domestic conditions permitting. (3) If an armistice agreement is not concluded, international tension will be heightened, American pressure on all countries to provide troops will increase, and Israel will find itself in a delicate and uncomfortable situation.

Note

1. See No. 516.

523. M. Sharett to A. Eban. 10 December 1951

Notes

1. The incoming version mentions telegram WPT26. Eban sent Sharett a telegram with this number on 9 December; it dealt with the activity concerning the authority and composition of the body proposed to replace the Conciliation Commission (93.01/2207/24).
2. See No. 520.

524. S. Divon (Paris) to W. Eytan. 12 December 1951

Copy: 130.02/2384/21

Divon reports on his activity in Paris. He succeeded in establishing communication and contacts with Mahmud 'Azmi, spokesman of the Egyptian delegation, with the Lebanese minister to the Benelux countries, Alphonse Ayub, and with the legal adviser of the Lebanese delegation, and had a hasty meeting with Tarazi of the Syrian delegation. Likewise he had held planned and chance meetings with several Arab journalists and also with an official from the Egyptian embassy, with Zaghlul Ali,[2] and with Ibrahim Mufti.[3] Divon also established contact with the Americans and British and to a certain extent with French officials dealing with the Middle East and Israel. He had some dealings with the Turks, and was able to get a perspective on Asia through the head of the Iranian delegation.[6] With regard to matters of substance, Divon reports the following: (1) Egyptian-Israeli relations —Fuad Sarraj al-Din and his camp on the one hand, and Mohammad Salah al-Din and his followers on the other, are the main forces shaping Egyptian policy. Up to the time of the Paris General Assembly meeting, Israel's representatives had managed to establish contact

with only one of the two. Establishing ties with Salah al-Din through 'Azmi is an important addition to the contacts between Israel and Egypt. Because of the shaky domestic situation in Egypt there is no possibility of any change in Egyptian-Israeli relations in the near future. His talk with 'Azmi provides an explanation for this situation.[7] In his speech to the General Assembly, Salah al-Din had shown relative moderation on the Palestine issue. Both the Arab and Western delegates noticed this. Some attributed it to clandestine contacts between Israel and Egypt. Divon, however, does not expect any change in the relations between the two countries in the near future. At present, the increasing recognition among various ruling and public circles in Egypt, that it is in Egypt's interest to settle the dispute with Israel and avoid a two-front war, cannot be expressed in overt acts of *rapprochement* because of the government's delicate situation. (2) The Arab League, the Arab countries, and the Middle East Command — there was palpable confusion and disquiet among both the Americans and the British. They admit that perhaps they are unable to assess the Middle East correctly. They attribute importance to the Israeli evaluations and are interested in hearing what they have to say.

Notes

1. Three words omitted here. See No. 446 and n. 1 *ibid.*
2. Zaghlul Ali, Egyptian journalist.
3. Ibrahim Mufti, Sudanese politician who supported union with Egypt.
4. The reference seems to be to Edwin Plitt, Adviser to the U.S. Delegation to the Sixth Session of the U.N. General Assembly.
5. Should read Edouard Sablier, senior correspondent of *Le Monde* and a specialist on Middle East affairs.
6. Ali J. Ardalan, Iran's permanent representative at the United Nations.
7. See No. 472.
8. See Divon to Eytan, 2 December 1951, 93.02/183/3.

525. A. Eban to M. Sharett and W. Eytan. 15 December 1951

Notes

1. See No. 516.
2. Herlitz cabled a draft resolution proposed by the Four Powers on the future of the Conciliation Commission, which Waldo had read to her in their last meeting. The draft included a preamble that recalled the General Assembly's resolutions on the Palestine question since 1948, as well as the following paragraphs: (a) agreement concerning the responsibility of the governments involved in the dispute to find a

solution to it; (b) a call to the governments to take advantage of the means that the United Nations was placing at their disposal; (c) an expression of appreciation to the Conciliation Commission; (d) a recommendation to extend the life of the Conciliation Commission, which would place its services at the disposal of both parties; (e) a recommendation that the Conciliation Commission establish its headquarters in New York; (f) empowering the Conciliation Commission, after consultation with the Secretary-General, to co-opt one or more additional members; (g) a request to the Commission to report to the next session of the General Assembly (14 December 1951, 93.01/2207/24).

526. D. Ben-Gurion to J. Nehru. 18 December 1951

527. M. Sharett to W. Eytan (Tel Aviv) and the Israel Embassy in Washington. 18 December 1951

Note

1. See No. 525, n. 2.

528. Meeting: M. Sharett–R. Schuman (Paris, 14 December 1951, document dated 18 December 1951)

Report: 130.02/2413/8

Following his meetings with Acheson,[1] Eden,[2] and Köprülü, Sharett met Schuman. Sharett apologized for not having heard Schuman's statements about Morocco.[3] Schuman accepted the apology and by way of response disclosed his feelings on all the complications that had been caused by the Egyptian initiative and spoke bitterly about the Arab League. Schuman thanked Sharett for Israel's support of the French position at the General Assembly. Sharett explained that Israel's support derived from two considerations: (a) Israel's general policy of acting in concert with France in the international arena, to the extent possible; (b) concern for the Jews of Morocco. Weighing against these two considerations were Israel's serious apprehensions stemming from its location in the midst of the Arab world. He foresaw criticism of the Government in the Knesset. Sharett wished to consult with Schuman about the election of the eleventh member of the Security Council.[4] Israel would support Belorussia not because it supported the Soviet Union but because of its approach in principle to fundamental U.N. issues. In addition, Greek membership on the Security

Council was unacceptpable to Israel, since Greece had always supported the Arab bloc. Schuman said that France had also initially supported Belorussia but in the later votes had switched to Greece. The French are convinced that the U.S. had made a mistake in this matter since at the present Greece seemed to have no prospects of being elected, while a minority was solidifying behind Belorussia that would keep Greece from obtaining the required two-thirds majority.

Sharett surveyed for Schuman the history of the Conciliation Commission's activity and the negative conclusions to be drawn from its activities during the past three years. He described the prevailing mood in the State Department in favour of a change in the mode of operation of the U.N. agency that would be entrusted with the matter —no initiative or ongoing activity, merely waiting for a request from one or both of the parties should they desire to utilize the services of the U.N. in order to embark on negotiations. Sharett presented his approach to three separate issues; security and refugees would remain the province of the U.N., but that body need not become involved in relations between the countries except at their request. Sharett's ideas were new to Schuman and he apologized that he had been taken up with other matters.

Towards the end Sharett brought up the issue of Jerusalem. He said it was preferable not to raise the question at the General Assembly: Middle Eastern affairs are too complicated as it is and the Assembly should be spared additional complications. On the other hand, the situation with regard to the status of the holy places had been stabilized and relations between Israel and the Catholic institutions were developing in a satisfactory manner. Schuman confirmed that he had heard no complaints from Catholic institutions concerning Israel's attitude towards them. He had feared that Abdallah's assassination would be followed by serious upheavals that would endanger the situation, but he was relieved when his fears proved groundless. He declared that France had no intention of taking an initiative concerning Jerusalem or of joining in an initiative launched by another country. He agreed with Sharett that it was better not to raise the issue.

Notes

1. See No. 525.
2. See No. 503.
3. In the Assembly plenum the Egyptian delegate had moved to place on the agenda the French violation of the principles of the U.N. Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Morocco. The Israel delegation decided to support the French position and to vote against including the item on the agenda.

4. On 6 December the General Assembly elected three non-permanent members of the Security Council to replace Ecuador, India, and Yugoslavia. Chile and Pakistan, which replaced the first two, were elected without difficulty on the first ballot (Israel voted for Chile and abstained in the vote on Pakistan). Two candidates were nominated to replace Yugoslavia: Greece, supported by the United States, and Belorussia, supported by the Soviet Union. In eight ballots during the course of the day neither candidate achieved the required majority. Israel, France, Britain, the Arabs, some of the South American countries, and the Soviet bloc supported Belorussia. The vote was postponed to the next plenary session. See No. 530 and nn. 4 and 5 *ibid*.

529. A. Eban (Washington) to D. Ben-Gurion (Tel Aviv) and M. Sharett (Paris). 18 December 1951

Coded Tel. WPT34; Outg.: 93.01/2207/24

Eban reports that during his visit to the State Department in order to introduce Goitein,[1] Berry, the acting department head, asked to make an official statement. Berry referred to a passage from Ben-Gurion's speech that had appeared in the *New York Times*, to the effect that Jewish engineers in the United States were encountering difficulty in finding employment and that this might serve as an impetus to immigration.[2] He said that the State Department regretted this statement. The department believes that the passage does not accurately reflect the situation in the United States or the equal status and firm standing of the country's Jewish citizens. Eban replied that undoubtedly Ben-Gurion aspired to the immigration to Israel of experts from the United States for positive reasons that have to do with creativity and pioneering, and that surely there had been some misunderstanding here. Berry accepted Eban's explanation. Eban added that though the atmosphere had been extremely cordial, the significance of the incident should not be underestimated. It constituted an explicit warning that the United States government would not ignore matters pertaining to its Jewish citizens and would not leave the question for discussion between Israel and American Jewry alone.

Notes

1. David Goitein, Israel Minister in Washington from December 1951; formerly minister to South Africa.
2. The reference is to Ben-Gurion's reply in the Knesset, on 12 December 1951, to two motions for the agenda on the question of *aliya*, submitted by representatives of Herut and the General Zionists. Following the steep and sudden drop in the flow of immigration, the opposition attacked the Government and blamed the Jewish Agency for adopting a new immigration policy based on restricting the number and type of immigrants.

In his reply Ben-Gurion argued that the stage of the mass transfer of Jews to Israel was about to end, unless the Soviet Union opened its gates; only a few countries—mainly the Islamic ones—could act as a source of mass immigration. He pointed out the socio-economic distress associated with the recent mass immigration and made it clear that at this stage the problem facing Israel was how to attract immigrants from the affluent countries. He was critical of the view that preaching to American Jews would stimulate their *aliya*, but added that "there is no doubt that the leaders of Zionism in America have become bankrupt" since the establishment of the State and that "not even 50 leaders have decided to immigrate to Israel".

Commenting on the shortage of professional manpower in Israel and the need to attract it from among American Jewry, Ben-Gurion stated: "I am sure that they will come. The United States has an abundance of professional manpower. I do not know if the Jewish economy [there] can absorb the entire Jewish intelligentsia, because the proportion of the intelligentsia that is Jewish is several times greater than the proportion of Jews in America" (*Divrei Ha-Knesset*, First Session of the Second Knesset, Vol. X, pp. 633–37).

530. M. Sharett to W. Eytan. 18 December 1951

Notes

1. John Selwyn Lloyd, minister of state in the Foreign Office from October 1951. Member of the British delegation to the Sixth Session of the U.N. General Assembly.
2. On the stalemate in the General Assembly over the election of the 11th member of the Security Council, see No. 528 and n. 4 *ibid.*
3. Question mark in the original. Evidently should read: there.
4. In a nine-paragraph telegram Sharett wrote of the situation created by the elections to the Security Council and the position of the Israel delegation on the matter. In paragraph 2 he stated that the problem was not voting for or against the Soviets, but rather support for the principle of regional representation in U.N. agencies. In paragraph 3 he added that, in view of the Soviet efforts to reach an agreement with the West, there was no reason to slap them in the face and give them a new propaganda card. In paragraph 4 he wrote that Russia would still not have a majority on the Security Council even if Belorussia were elected and that in any case the Soviet Union had the veto. In paragraph 5 Sharett presented the reasons why Israel opposed the inclusion of Greece on the Security Council. He wrote that Israel had enough to contend with following the election of hostile Pakistan, and Greece should not be added to it. Moreover, if Greece were elected at the Sixth Assembly it would be joined the following year by an Arab country, which would replace Turkey; whereas if Belorussia were elected Greece would replace Turkey at the Seventh Assembly and the Arab countries would remain outside the Security Council. According to him, the Soviets had never voted against Israel in the Security Council. In paragraph 9 Sharett asked for Ben-Gurion's approval to vote for Belorussia, despite the American pressure (16 December 1951, 93.02/183/3).
5. Eytan replied that Ben-Gurion left the question of the Security Council elections to the discretion of the delegation (telegram from Eytan to Sharett, 79, 19 December 1951, 93.02/182/10). In the final ballot on 20 December Greece was elected to the Security Council; Israel abstained.

531. M. Sharett to W. Eytan, E. Elath, and D. Goitein. 19 December 1951

Notes

1. John Coulson, deputy to the permanent representative of the United Kingdom at the U.N.
2. See No. 527.
3. Cf. the report on the conversation in the telegram from the British delegation to the U.N. to the British Foreign Office, 19 December 1951, PRO FO371/91410.

532. Meeting: A. Lourie–A. Kyrou. 20 December 1951

Notes

1. Alexis Kyrou, Greek permanent representative at the U.N.
2. Jean Politis, Permanent Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs and head of the Greek delegation to the Sixth Session of the U.N. General Assembly.

533. Israel Legation in Prague to the East European Division. 21 December 1951

Coded Tel. P325; Inc.: 130.09/2343/1

Further to a previous telegram,[1] the Israel minister in Prague reports that Zápotocký's speech had aroused panic among the Jewish population, who saw it as official approval for the anti-Semitic line adopted by party functionaries after the imprisonment of Slanský.[2] The question is whether this is a restricted, local phenomenon or the first step in a new Cominform policy, as the minister had previously suggested in Telegram 304.[3] In the minister's opinion, Slanský had perhaps opposed Czechoslovakia's pro-Arab policy and the sale of weapons to Egypt, and this opposition had led to his indictment as a Zionist, the description of Israel as "a country working against the national movements which are freeing themselves from colonial regimes", and the dismissal of most Jewish civil servants. The minister adds that some reaction to these phenomena is necessary. He proposes condemnation of the new line in the press in London and in Paris, on the assumption that Czechoslovakia is sensitive to international public opinion. He repeats the proposal made in Telegram 2646[5] that Bartušek be informed of Israel's concern about Czechoslovak-Israel relations. He also proposes requesting an official explanation from the foreign minister concerning the article and the speech and informing

him that since the Zionist movement is about to receive official status, its description as an instrument of terrorism, conspiracy, and hatred against the Soviet Union and the people's democracies is a most serious accusation detrimental to Israel. The minister requests authorization to read to the foreign ministers in Prague and Warsaw the text of the letter of reply that had been sent to Moscow.[6]

Notes

1. Antonin Zápotocký, Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia. In a speech on 19 December, Zápotocký said: "We shall not tolerate interference in our internal affairs or any concrete outside pressure, whether from Washington, London, Rome, or Jerusalem." He went on to attack the leaders of the Social Democrats and said that "these reactionaries desired to return the nationalized enterprises of Jewish and other capitalists." By way of example he mentioned the case of the Jewish small industrialist, which had caused a furore in 1948 because of anti-Semitic outbursts when he had insisted on his rights (telegram from the Israel Legation in Prague, 19 December 1951, 130.09/2343/1).
2. Rudolf Slanský, Secretary-General of the Czechoslovak Communist Party until September 1951. In the wake of the changes in the organizational structure of the Party he was appointed Deputy Prime Minister on 9 September. On 27 November he was arrested on a charge of "conspiring against the state".
3. In the telegram from Prague the minister reported on the initial repercussions of Slanský's arrest and analysed the significance of the event and its implications for the Jews in Czechoslovakia. In the seventh paragraph he expressed the fear of the legation staff "that Cominform circles believe that Israel has firmly resolved to join the Middle East Command and there is no further need to show favour to Israel in particular or the Jews in general. Some even go further and view the Slanský affair as a warning to Israel and prophesy doom for all the Jews in Eastern Europe if we do in fact join the Command" (4 December 1951, 130.09/2343/1).
4. The Czech Communist Party weekly *Tvorba* (13 December 1951) published an article on "Cosmopolitans as an Aggressive Tool of Imperialism". The article was full of anti-Semitic allusions, but particularly hostile was the following paragraph: "Recently, many cosmopolitan elements have emerged, and subsequently become agents of the Anglo-American aggressors, from the ranks of the consciously active Zionists, who have failed to set down roots among our people. The Jewish State of Israel is today in the hands of the bourgeois Jewish nationalists who have sold themselves to American imperialism. They use that country as an agent working against the national liberation movements in the colonies and exploit the Zionist movement as an agent for acts of terrorism, hostility and enmity against the Soviet Union and the people's democracies." (See telegram from the Israel Legation in Prague to the East European Division, P321, 19 December 1951, 130.09/2343/1.)
5. Kubovy reported on the imprisonment of Zionist activists in Czechoslovakia and expressed concern that there was a link between their arrest and the anti-Semitic manifestations that had appeared recently in Czechoslovakia, including the purging of the Communist Party apparatus of "intellectuals and cosmopolitans". In the sixth paragraph of the telegram he suggested that Alois Bartušek, second secretary in the Czech legation in Israel and acting chargé d'affaires, be summoned to the Foreign

Ministry at once and be given a "friendly but stern" talk about the situation (25 October 1951, 130.09/2343/1).

6. See No. 521.

Editorial Note

Discussion and Decision on Israel's Request for American Military Assistance

On 24 December, the Prime Minister met the Foreign Minister, the Chief of Staff, and the ambassador in Washington to make a final decision about requesting military assistance from the United States. Eban supported such a request, mainly because he feared that without it Israel would not receive the American economic aid which was then up for approval. Yadin, on the other hand, feared that the military information the Americans would acquire while arranging the military assistance might find its way to the Arabs. After a heated discussion, it was decided to apply for U.S. aid. Ben-Gurion appointed a committee to prepare the aid request, with emphasis on equipment and facilities rather than on armaments. In his diary Ben-Gurion commented that Yadin's fear was not groundless, but was exaggerated; the country's security depended on its strength and not on maintaining secrecy. "Neither do I fear an Arab attack," he wrote. "On the contrary, let it come!" (See Ben-Gurion's diaries, 14 December 1951, IMDEA; telegram from Eban to Kollek and Goitein, IWA 973, 28 December 1951, 130.09/2308/22.)

534. M. Shalit to R. Shiloah. 29 December 1951

Notes

1. Shiloah wrote of the death sentence confirmed by the appeals court in Baghdad on Yosef Basri and Shalom Sallah Shalom, who had been convicted of planting bombs and of membership in a "Zionist spy network" in Iraq. He asked the embassy staff to make a supreme effort aimed at urgent American intervention with the Iraqi royal court (27 December 1951, 93.01/2207/24).
2. Samuel Kopper, deputy director of the office of Near Eastern affairs in the Department of State.
3. William O. Douglas, associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.
4. Samuel Klaus, an adviser in the Department of State.
5. Abba Schwartz, formerly (1947–49) a senior official of the U.N. International Refugee Organization, in charge of reparations.

535. M. Sharett (Tel Aviv) to W. Eytan. 30 December 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2436/6

Sharett responds to Sasson's letter about Eytan's conversation with Riley on the possibility of negotiations with Egypt to extend the armistice agreement.[1] First of all, reports Sharett, in Paris Riley related what he had told Eytan. This took place during a dinner with Rafael. Sharett asked whether Riley would agree that Israel attempt to sound out the Egyptians in direct negotiations in order to have a better idea of their intentions and find out whether they were willing to modify the armistice agreements with the object of advancing towards peace. Riley encouraged Sharett to do so. Sharett accordingly instructed Divon to use his contacts. Divon spoke with 'Azmi and the latter made inquiries among authorized circles in Paris and Cairo. After some time he transmitted a totally negative answer: at present the Egyptian government is not prepared to take any steps in this direction. Israel informed Riley of the results of the inquiry, and there the affair ended. In Sharett's opinion, the whole matter should be interpreted as resulting from Riley's desire to enhance his standing and present himself as a major actor in the search for peace in the Middle East, in place of the languishing Conciliation Commission. Sharett summarizes the general lines of Egyptian policy, as reflected at the General Assembly, under two headings: on the one hand, they do not wish to widen the gap between them and Israel, and the proof of this was a distinctly moderate tone *vis-à-vis* Israel in speeches before the Assembly and statements at press conferences; on the other hand, they are quite unwilling to take any step that would narrow the gap, because this would be antithetical to their ceaseless efforts to unite the Arab countries around them in their conflict with Britain.

Sharett does not accept Sasson's reservations about using the armistice agreements as a framework to advance towards peace. Sharett contends: (1) In the final analysis, the prospects for substantial progress towards peace do not depend on the framework or modalities of the negotiations but on the awakening of the desire for peace. (2) If the desire for peace is awakened, the question of framework or modalities must not be underrated; in such a case the other party would almost certainly prefer the easier rather than the more difficult option. (3) One can definitely assume that an Arab country would find it easier to afford to give a new agreement with Israel the status of a modification of an existing accord. The Arab side would prefer an expansion of the armistice agreement to explicit peace talks. (4) Concerning the modalities of negotiations, too, the first option is easier

for the Arabs. Under the armistice agreement, either party is entitled to ask the Secretary-General of the U.N. to convene a conference for the purpose of modifying the agreement; in such a case the other party is obliged to respond. There is no point in invoking such a process as long as there is no guarantee about the chances for agreement, but assuming that there were a desire to reach an agreement, Egypt would find it more convenient to appear to be responding to an Israeli initiative by virtue of its previous commitment rather than to be seen as an equal partner to a new initiative. (5) This method has an additional advantage. It extricates Israel from collective negotiations with all neighbouring countries at once, the method adopted by the Conciliation Commission, and restores a process of separate negotiations with each country, which had been Bunche's practice. (6) In any event, Israel will not undertake any official public step in this direction until it knows that the other side too is interested in progress. The preferred procedure is to reach a direct and secret preliminary agreement and only then give it the official backing of the United Nations by approaching the Secretary-General and staging official negotiations in the framework set forth in the armistice agreement. (7) Sharett proposes adopting the above line in exploratory and explanatory talks with the other side. Such arguments had already helped Israel persuade the American delegation that to advance peace there was no need for a permanent mediating body or even for expansion of the authority of the chief of staff of the U.N. observers mission. It had also been accepted by an Egyptian figure who had offered to help Israel win over members of Egypt's ruling echelon to the cause of peace.[2]

Notes

1. See No. 468, last paragraph. Sasson cast doubt on the value of negotiations with Egypt and offered several arguments to support his scepticism. He noted that General Riley had "changed his tune" and that the international and pan-Arab situation had also changed. The preparation of a "conference", to use his word, by the United States, Britain and France "was not enough to ensure success in advance. On the contrary: it would guarantee pressure" on Israel "and favouritism towards the Arabs", especially in light of the West's relations with the Arab countries. He pointed out the advantage in Bunche's involvement with the plan, but stressed that one could not expect fortune to smile on him as in the past; times had changed, and the Arabs lacked the urgent need for a settlement that they had formerly had for the armistice agreements. Despite his doubts, Sasson proposed giving serious consideration to the proposal, especially in view of the possibility that the disbanding of the Conciliation Commission would consign all thoughts of a settlement to oblivion, which was an undesirable situation (130.02/2428/1).
2. Apparently the reference is to the initiative of Egyptian Prince Abbas Halim, then

visiting Switzerland, who had proposed a meeting with the Israel Minister in Bern with the aim of exploring the possibilities of a settlement. Sharett gave instructions that such a meeting be held, but did not attach much hope to its outcome (telegram from Sharett to Eytan, 21 December 1951, 93.02/183/3).

536. M. Sasson (Tel Aviv) to the Bureau of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. 31 December 1951

Orig.: 130.02/2431/9

Sasson reports on a conversation with Touqan on 28 December. The meeting was held at Touqan's initiative, in accordance with instructions from his prime minister, in order to inform Israel of the following matters: (1) Abdallah's death and Talal's accession have not changed Jordan's policy towards and appraisal of Israel. The fact that a large part of the refugee burden falls on Jordan and that Jordan has a long common border with Israel creates joint problems for the two countries. Jordan is interested in a quiet border and in maintaining ties with Israel to facilitate mutual observance of the armistice agreement. Jordan is interested in good relations with Israel and the Palestinian problem will also be solved in due time. The prime minister had appointed Touqan as his liaison with Israel, and even authorized him to travel to Tel Aviv should the need arise. (2) The prime minister of Jordan wished to inform Israel that the Jordanian position on Jerusalem has not changed. Abdallah's policy on this question was accepted by Talal and the government. Even should Egypt request that Jordan change its stance, Jordan would refuse. (3) King Talal, the prime minister of Jordan and his government, and the Jordanian parliament oppose the proposed merger with Iraq and will continue to preserve Jordanian independence. On this issue Touqan had been asked to convey statements made by the Jordanian prime minister in a closed session of the lower house of the Jordanian parliament: (a) Merger with Iraq would not bring about Jordan's economic independence. (b) From a military point of view, Iraq is unable to solve its own problems and requires outside help. It could not be expected to meet the demands of the Jordanian army. (c) The ties between Iraq and Britain are not based on clear and firm criteria. On the other hand, Jordan is interested in safeguarding its healthy relations with Britain; merger with Iraq would be liable to lead to ambiguity and unnecessary complications. (d) As far as the royal court is concerned, the Jordanian crown is not negotiable. Talal wants to preserve the independence of his kingdom. A merger might impinge on him personally and on the crown. (e) Jordan realizes that Israel does not view

the merger idea favourably. Its implementation might involve Jordan in hazardous ventures that it ought to avoid.

After the prime minister had warned Parliament to desist from further discussion of the matter and had threatened to dissolve Parliament and go to the people, the delegates made it clear to Talal that they had not intended to place either him or his throne in jeopardy, that they had been convinced by the prime minister, and considered the question of unification a closed chapter.

At the end of the talk, Touqan mentioned that the Jordanian prime minister supported a solution to the problem of the Qalqiliya lands through exchange of territory. Touqan discussed the matter with Ramati.[1] A further meeting was scheduled for 4 January 1952, at which Touqan will hear Israel's response.

Note

1. See report No. 268 by S. Ramati (in English), entitled: "Development of Qalqiliya dispute from 14th to 21st December 1951", 130.02/2431/9.

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TO MAIN VOLUME AND COMPANION VOLUME

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References to the principal addressees in this volume — Ben-Gurion, Eban, Elath, Eytan, and Sharett — are noted only when they are the authors of documents or are mentioned in them.

* *Abbreviations*
b.—born
n—note
CV—Companion Volume
I.D.F.—Israel Defence Forces